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LITTLE WHITE LIES

Truth & Movies

**INÁRRITU
& BERNAL
ON POLITICS,
SUCCESS
AND
AMERICAN
GUILT**

**PLUS EXCLUSIVE
INTERVIEWS WITH:**

ALFONSO CUARÓN

RINKO KIKUCHI

PAUL VERHOEVEN

NIC ROEG

PATRICE CHÉREAU

TOM TYKWER

KELLY REICHARDT

KEVIN MACDONALD

NURI BILGE CEYLAN

JOHN CAMERON MITCHELL

JAMES LAVELLE





**"KILL ME, BUT
SAVE MY BROTHER.
HE DID NOTHING."**

COVER ILLUSTRATION
BY PAUL MONTAGNA
WORDS BY
MARK STUCKENBROOK

Chapter One
إني أريد
سنة
Gabe.

ARABIC & ENGLISH
DARRELL STANLEY
STARRING DMC PRO. CO.
MUSIC: David Garcia
FELIX: KIRAN KIRAN

THE ARABIC
BOOKS

Four continents, multiple tragedies, one vision. In *Babel*, Alejandro González Iñárritu has made the finest, and angriest, film of his career.

"Come, let us make a city and a tower, the top whereof may reach to heaven. And let us make our name famous before we be scattered abroad into all lands."

In Genesis, the children of Adam get a righteous slapping for their act of God-battering hubris. Just so, two films in to a rocket-powered career, Alejandro González Iñárritu finds himself perched atop a mountain of awards, just about ripe for a good old-fashioned critical smiting. There's one problem: *Babel* is an eloquent deconstruction of modern times that defies almost any label or category save "genius."

Alongside regular collaborator Guillermo Arriaga, Iñárritu is no stranger to fractured stories and broken lives. Both Amores Perros and 21 Grams traded in narrative and emotional complexities, and at first glance *Babel* is covering similarly unlit ground. Don't be misled. Where Amores Perros was experimental and exuberant, and 21 Grams was a macabre tussle between the feistiness of its structure and Sean Penn's

gravitational pull, *Babel* has an altogether different feel. At a time when almost every studio is thinking in trilogies, *Babel* is a film that disorients and enriches. Iñárritu's previous work because it feels less like a conclusion than a culmination. In its density, its sophistication and certainly in its sense of moral outrage, *Babel* is by far the most important work of Iñárritu's career. ▀





In Morocco, state skins tossed by barren mountains lend the landscape an oppressive stagnation. Everything is endless, depthless and ancient, especially the people. In a tiny village a Berber with a face like cheese carved on leather and fathomless black eyes trades a hunting rifle for a goat. On the tourist trail to Tazewine a coach winds through the valley, selling pre-packaged parts of the country's culture, fit for consumption like bottled water. Richard and Susan stare at the space between them, as frozen as the ice that Susan won't drink – fearful and bitter, as lost right there as later, after that ice is shattered by the crack of the rifle.

In Mexico, a housekeeper approaches the US border with her nephew and two American children, returning to their home in San Diego. They are stopped and searched – an everyday act of humiliation that accrues like dirt beneath the skin. In Tokyo, in the mucous mayhem of that high-tech metropolis, Chile is cocooned in silence – a deaf-mute searching for a language that she can only find physically.

From this tangled web emerges a narrative at once humbling in focus and breathtaking in scope.

It's about grief, loss and loneliness, about the choices we make every day – to fear, to hate, to distrust – and the consequences that stretch beyond imagining. But more than that, these personal tragedies are a patchwork – individual stories which, taken together, form the global narrative of the war on terror. While deft and elegant, *Kabul* is thunderously political, painting a picture of a world in which some of us are victims of accidents, but all of us are victims of the systematic cultural violence enshrined in the tenets of Western imperialism. ▼





Five years after the declaration of war, *Strangers* have finally found the courage to engage with its consequences. But it's taken two Mexicans – two immigrants on American soil – to express what the Americans themselves couldn't see, that it wasn't 9/11 that changed the world. It was America's response to it. In a film about the differences between language and communication, words are imbued with new power and meaning. In its evocation of terrorism, a word that costs an innocent Mexican child his life, a word whose brutalizing effect leaves a trail of fear and violence across cultures and continents, *Stranger* is about the most powerful and the least recognizable of them all.

The film's thematic power is of a piece with its stunning composition

Stranger described the process of shooting in three disparate countries, often with non-professional actors, as "not that execution." Photographed by Rodrigo Prieto (who shot both of *Stranger*'s previous films, as well as *Graveyard Book*), *Stranger*'s each landscape is represented by subtle differences in texture and grain. But it goes deeper. *Stranger* took an "obsessive and almost" approach to shooting his disparate locations and the result is not just a singular story told from multiple perspectives (though *Stranger* is that), but three quite separate stories altogether, three different genres almost, each quite brilliant in its own right.

In the starved scrub of Morocco, a claustrophobic mental drone evolves into an expansive polemic. Caked in dust and dirt, Pitt and Blanchett seem to seep into their surroundings. While *Stranger* Pitt may not have undergone a physical transformation exactly, he looks every one of his 43 years, and more: there are gray flecks to the beard and crown; but much out there his eyes like twin looking out. *Stranger* knows exactly what he has with Pitt, and exactly what to do with him; he breaks him, and suddenly those famous, flawless features disappear in an ensemble of grief. It's Blanchett, dying on the floor of a squalid hut, who carries the weight of the film's emotional metaphors – power and helplessness, the illusion of safety, but it's Pitt who represents the betrayal of trust. The other tourists on the couch eventually abandon them in the village, terrified by the breakdown of comfortable boundaries, fearful of the too-real life to which they've been exposed. In their wake, Pitt's "thank you" to the local guide who has stayed with him is a moment of quiet significance.

Returning home, *Stranger* shoots Mexico and the Mexican desert as a rebuke to the racist-nostalgic myth-making of John Ford and *The Alamo*, governed by the final intensity of Gael García Bernal. The border is a place of bleak, dehumanizing rhythm, but Mexico itself is an undiscovered country, seen through the eyes of the American children. At first they echo the fears of their parents but, uncorrupted by cynicism, they see past the unfamiliar and the superficial to the people beneath.

But the most distinct of these three films is *Stranger*'s Tokyo story – a superbly crafted study of deception, intimacy, longing, and stylized. As Chieko, Rinko Kikuchi gives a performance of heartbreaking honesty, slipped raw inside and out, the depth of her emotional void sharply contrasting with the tiny home of her naked body. To her, as to us, Tokyo is a city of striking lights and silent rooms so fast-paced, so hooked-up as to be every bit as repulsive as a North African village. But even here, in the

techno temple of the communication age, language and intimacy have a flawed and uncertain meaning. At first Rinko leaves out with the only unambiguous expression she has – herself, her own availability. But *Stranger* will break her too and when he does, under the flicking strobes of a Tokyo club, it's one of the very best scenes ever made in film this year.

In as much as it bears comparison to its contemporaries, think of *Stranger* as *Crash* without the sanctimony, or *The Grinch* without the sentimental. But think of it as more than that as well. It's a film of extraordinary subtlety as much as it's a film of righteous anger. Yes, it's structurally tenuous (but, really, there hasn't been a film like *Stranger* for years. Not from *Stranger*. Not from anybody. ■

Turn to page 58 for an exclusive interview with Alejandro González Iñárritu and Gael García Bernal



Anticipation: A winner at Cannes, but chapters suggested that *Stranger* had failed to move on from his last two films. **Not**

Enjoyment: Absorbing, graceful, creative and emotional. *Stranger* is gripping filmmaking in its most unpolished triumph. **Not**

In Retrospect: Does it have *Stranger* Well, there weren't many good jokes. *Stranger* matters. **Not**



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Vs. JOHN LENNON

ARTIST. HUMANITARIAN. NATIONAL THREAT

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12 continued from previous page

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Alfred de Tregoville

CHAPTER ONE
IN WHICH
SHE
GABRIEL

LWlier

What do you love about movies?

Wardle

About movies?

LWlier

About movies

Wardle

You: There are so many angles. What do I love about movies? I think a way to put it is that, besides the fact that I can eat popcorn without guilt, I think that it reminds me of and reveals to me things about the human condition that I'm not aware of until that moment. It brings me closer to the things that I should be close to, but I have forgotten when a film touches me on that level. It reminds me of my own life, and it gives me a justification for this complex life that we are living; it puts me in touch with the source and the reason and the meaning of life.

LWlier

Gael?

Bernal

I have a very concrete answer thanks to the skepticism and the return of a 17 year-old girl from Brazil that told me this. She lives in Foz de Iguaçu, a big *favela* in Rio, and she's doing some great workshops with Fernando Mourão about filmmaking in the *favelas*. She said, 'Ultimately, I don't know if I want to dedicate myself to cinema. But what cinema has given me is the opportunity to know about the Other, and to know that the Other is not much different from what I am.' So if I had to choose one sentence to show what cinema is about, it is that: It has allowed me to see the world - making it or watching it - it has allowed me to see the world, noticing that the Other is not much different than I am.

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LETTERS

Ben-Judah, everyone likes you! As a contemporary Jewish writer, I feel that the very thing people at the Regent Palace and everyone

JAMES LIVES US

James, I really enjoy reading something about Shakespeare. Not the usual stuff, but your two latest ones. He was a real character, wasn't he? I'm looking forward to your next one, which I hope is about Shakespeare's death.

SHOP FLOP

I really enjoy how different your magazine is to the others and your art is fantastic. I'm a complete shopaholic and I also love the advertising and everything else you do in the shop. I'm a complete shopaholic and I also love the advertising and everything else you do in the shop. I'm a complete shopaholic and I also love the advertising and everything else you do in the shop.

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Ben-Judah, I'm really enjoying your book on food. It's so good to see something about food. I'm a complete foodie and I also love the advertising and everything else you do in the shop. I'm a complete foodie and I also love the advertising and everything else you do in the shop.

with you on the cover, and really enjoyed the Shakespeare piece. Don't you ever get "shop" bags, or like was pretty good. I'm a complete shopaholic and I also love the advertising and everything else you do in the shop. I'm a complete shopaholic and I also love the advertising and everything else you do in the shop.

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TOO SMOOTH

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TOP OF THE COPPS

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REQUIEM IS A DREAM

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INTERVIEW WHO?

Ben-Judah, I'm really enjoying your book on food. It's so good to see something about food. I'm a complete foodie and I also love the advertising and everything else you do in the shop. I'm a complete foodie and I also love the advertising and everything else you do in the shop.

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DIRECTED BY JUAN CARLOS DESOULA

CHAPTER THREE
IN WHICH WE
DISCUSS THE MEANS OF
UNCOMMON INTEREST
INSPIRED BY OUR
FEATURE FILM

SURFING THE GOOD WAVE

*Jason Wood, author
of The Faber
Book of Mexican
Cinema, tackles the
social, political and
cinematic roots of
Mexican movies?
Buena Onda.*

The turn of the twenty-first century ushered in a thrilling new wave in Mexican filmmaking.

This Golden Age was not the first such wave, but it broke open the global cinema scene with an unprecedented energy.

The international success of *Amores Puros* and *Y Tu Mamá También* alerted the eyes of the world to an embarrassment of new talent in Latin America, from directors Alejandro González Iñárritu, Guillermo del Toro and Alfonso Cuarón, cinematographers Rodrigo Prieto and Emmanuel Lubezki to the electrifying screen presence of Gael García Bernal. Their rise to prominence — aided by a new entrepreneurial spirit amongst Mexican financiers and producers — coincided with an emerging generation of Mexican cinematographers thirsting for intelligent, identity-affirming, locally made product. Having endured a period of creative famine throughout the '80s and early part of the '90s, Mexico once more had a national cinema to shout about, and global audiences sat up and took note.

However, though these films and filmmaking figures rose to prominence through a series of alchemical factors, they did not emerge from a cultural or historical vacuum. Mexican cinema has followed a pattern of boom and bust, a prolonged period of artistic and economic success followed by a period of famine, quite often aligned to changes in government, reduced funding, and a general hostility towards the arts. Indeed, this tradition stretches right back to the earliest days of the medium.

One of the belle époque's success stories, Mexico was prosperous and politically stable in the 1930s so it's no surprise that the movie production and early films produced by the Lumière brothers appeared there shortly after they became popular in Europe. Mexican audiences greeted the new form of entertainment just as enthusiastically as their European counterparts. While it is not well documented, there was certainly a silent film era in Mexico, with the export of cinema there linked to Salvador Teóscame Barragán, an engineering student who opened the first Mexican movie station and began to create some of the country's first film productions. By 1900 the popularity of cinema within Mexico — and particularly Mexico City — was well established, with new saloons opening and new equipment being imported.

In this formative period the majority of 'entertainments' were locally produced documents of momentous national events such as the opening of new railroad lines or

Presidential excursions. However, in 1907 one of the first major films to be produced from a script was completed: *Elpele de Jesús* (The Girdle of Jesus). After a surge, there followed a period of decline in the '20s as Hollywood established itself in the dominant force in filmmaking. With audiences turning increasingly to imported newsreels originating from America, film production in Mexico — which was not supported by the state — suffered a rapid downturn, while the more sophisticated Hollywood films successfully offered fantasy and escape. This reputation of 'localised product' would repeat itself many times. Moreover, the established Mexican film artists (such as they were) were not exempt to overtures from the North, and so figures such as Dolores del Río and Lupita Tellería set sail for pastures new.

It was the coming of sound that allowed Mexico to regain ground as a filmmaking entity, and although in 1932 (a few years after the arrival of Sergei Eisenstein) only six films were produced, two were by directors who would make a valuable contribution to the country's cinema: Fernando de Fuentes (*El Ahorcado*) and Soviet émigré Kazimír Boyler (*Mexico México*). Backed by renewed private investment (locality distributor Juan de la Cruz Alencón had formed the *Compañía Nacional Productora de Películas*), Mexican cinema was once again at the forefront of Spanish language film production by 1932. Developing its own genres and styles (such as the *cinema octonario*) and enjoying a largely healthy relationship with the Cárdenas government (there was a drive towards populism as opposed to artistic elitism), Mexican cinema continued to flourish right up to the end of the '30s and the declaration of World War II.

Commercially successfully and now fully industrialised, Mexican cinema took full advantage of the opportunities presented by the war, and although the more conservative administration of Ávila Camacho came to power in 1940, it coincided with one of the country's most culturally creative periods. With the war effort leading to a decline in American production, Mexican cinema gained a strong foothold both at home and abroad, exporting its films to the growing Latin American market and establishing international stars such as María Moreno 'Carmelita', Pedro Armendáriz and María Félix, and genres such as the family melodrama and patriotic historical epic. Mexican cinema began to achieve the difficult task of establishing a self-sustaining film industry capable of producing pictures that bridge the gap between art and commerce.

This was the Golden Age of Mexican cinema. *El Cine de Oro* coincided with the administration of Miguel Alemán from 1946-1952, and was inextricably linked to unprecedented economic growth and prosperity, proving to be a high point both in terms of production and profits. A major contributing factor to its filmmaking status at this time was the courting of Mexico as a valuable ally against Axis countries by the US. Revenues increased and access to technology became widely available. Similarly, the period saw an increased attention to filmmaking by the state as it sought to protect what was becoming a valuable cultural and economic asset. Thus, in 1942 the *Ilenco Cinematográfico* was founded to facilitate the funding of film production. A law was also passed in 1946 that protected the film industry from economic loss. Thriving in the shade of state protection and subsidy, Mexican cinema found itself in the midst of a Golden Age, an epoch of big stars (Germán Valdés 'Tin-Tin', María Félix), quality films and high output that continued into the late '50s.

Sadly, the involvement of the state was to contribute to the increasingly conservative and middle class nature of Mexican cinema. Rising production costs were also problematic as firms started to trend and fostered formalism (dance films, broad comedy routines), and increasingly grumpy intellectuals to ensure that they were a commercial success. The country's intellectuals and university film clubs began a quest for quality filmmakers and the encouragement of younger filmmaking talent, but to little avail. In 1928, with the coming to presidency of Adolfo López Mateos, Mexican cinema was to enter its very darkest days, but there was a ray of light. The early '60s would witness the birth of a new generation who would take Mexican cinema into a new century of extraordinary vitality. ■

THE TOP 100 MEXICAN MOVIES

Vamos con Pancho Villa (Let's Go with Pancho Villa) (1935)

Director: Fernando de Fuentes

Starring: Antonio R Frausto, Gernage Soler, Ramón Valerao

During the Mexican revolution, a group of farmers, known as the 'Lords of San Pablo' are united to the army of Pancho Villa. However, their initial enthusiasm and optimism soon gives way to disenchantment and death. Standing apart from the many movies made about Villa in that it portrays the man and the revolution in all its cruelty, this is a classic tale of sound decisions, and still the most potent celluloid portrait of the Mexican revolution in existence. Shot on a lavish budget, the film, part of a trilogy by de Fuentes, was the first government-sponsored super production.

Panórama (Town Tale) (1949)

Director: Emilio Fernández

Starring: Wally Colunga Gamigato, Roberto Calde, Arturo Soto Rangel

Prisoned for murder and sentenced to jail, Aurelio Rodríguez (Calde) returns home following his release, only to find that his village is still considered a parish. The ex-convict exacerbates the already tense situation by falling in love with the girlfriend (Gamigato) of the town's former political boss (Luis Acuña Castañeda). Echoing Fernández's own life, the narrowly escaped a jail sentence for revolutionary activities, Panórama images aspects of the melodrama and the western to original effect. Fernández also makes the most of the geography, setting his town tale in the shadows of two volcanic mountains (Popocatepetl and Iztaccihuatl).

Los Olvidados (The Young and the Damned) (1950)

Director: Luis Buñuel

Starring: Estela Inda, Miguel Inclán, Alfonso Mejía

Set in the slums of Mexico City, this classic film follows the crime-filled lives of a gang of juvenile delinquents, focusing on the ultimate destruction of Pedro (Mejía), the meekest gang's youngest member. Shot on location with nonprofessional actors, it's a caustic and unimpeachable account of cruelty, exploitation and neglect, mixing documentary realism (it evolved from Buñuel's *Land Without Bread*) with sequences of surreal poetic intensity. *Los Olvidados* earned its maker the Best Director and the International Critics Prize at the 1950 Cannes Film Festival, returning Buñuel to the public eye and establishing his reputation as a world-class director.

El Vampiro

Director: Fernando Méndez, Paul Nagel

Starring: Abel Salazar, Gómez Robles, Araceli Wehler

Unlike his gothicized sets, this is perhaps the best of the vampire films from the '50s. Travelling back to her childhood home, Marta (Wehler) meets a mysterious doctor (Renor Salazar), an evil vampire who insists he accompany her. When they arrive, they find that her aunt is under the control of Count Laxid (Robles), an evil vampire who has come to the area to bring his dead brother back to life. Beautifully photographed and full of Gothic atmosphere, *El Vampiro* predates Hammer's *Dracula*, and features a performance by the veteran Robles that many rate as highly as that of Lugosi. Cult viewing and ripe for rediscovery.

The *Feder Book of Mexican Cinema* (Faber & Faber, 2006, £15.99) is out now to buy. Check out the review on www.kiffcultbooks.co.uk



With a new Golden Age of Mexican cinema in full flow, Alfonso Cuarón looks back at his own career, and embraces the "young masters" already taking it to the next level.

From *Graveyard Book* investigation by Paul Wernick

While Mexican cinema suffered under the rule of Adolfo López Mateos, Alfonso Cuarón was too busy watching cheesy comedies to notice. "In the '60s I was just a kid. I watched a

very small percentage of Mexican cinema... I was more about Hollywood, American films. It was only at the end of the '60s that I discovered Italian cinema."

This discovery would prove to be a turning point for the young cineaste and in that respect, perhaps a seminal moment for modern Mexican film. But Cuarón remembers the tale of his very introduction to the world of European movies with the twist of a naughty schoolboy. "One night when I was eight my parents went to a party, and my cousin and I sneaked downstairs to watch TV. We watched on the television and there was a movie which was described as being 'for adults only'—so we thought it would have lots of titbits in it, you know? As it turned out, the pair had stumbled on late night Italian horror. "I remember my cousin and just crying all the way through it." ▼

...the...
...to see anything that was Italian
...remember seeing any American [film], but... didn't
...really get it. But then I saw a do-it-for-me...
...and a Mexican's comedy, and I really enjoyed
...I took me a while later on to see another
...American movie. I think it was *The Italian*
...which... really... really... didn't like that one
...then... was... is another."

Pieced together though it was, Cuarón's cinematic education had started early, and he was

aware that he would be a filmmaker. "Do you remember in Godfather when the narrator says, 'So far back as I can remember I always wanted to be a gangster'? Well, ever since I can remember I've always wanted to be a director to make films." But what sort of films would be made by a young man who was as happy directing experimental European cinema as enjoying the latest Billy Wilder? As the director of such disparate productions as *Harry Potter* and the *Princess of Asturias* and *Y Tu Mama Parodia*, clearly appreciative, a near-say near attitude to genre has broadened his own palette. "Growing up — particularly in my early teens —

I would love to see a nice adventure in once Western, and then go and see a Brazilian movie or a Buñuel — enjoyed absolutely everything — for me it was about the film form.

As his career progressed, Cuarón tempered his receptiveness to the widest possible spectrum of influences with a strong personal vision of his art. "The always done what I want. I've always chosen my own projects. Sometimes in the past I haven't been able to do things I wanted to do, but then I've always ended up doing something different that I also wanted to do. I don't believe in compromise. I cannot compromise in the sense that if you compromise and things don't go right, you would blame yourself all the time thinking, 'What if?'"

For Cuarón, the decision to take on a film can't be approached lightly. "The films have made far good or far of. I take full responsibility for it. If they are lousy that's my fault." Nonetheless, however his unwillingness to let a project slip from his grasp has caused unforeseen difficulties. "When I wrote *Children of Men*, right after... to Maria Teresita. I then went

...to... I kept...
...about Cuarón or that that I don't want to lose the project, so I followed the studio to employ a hack to work on some scenes while...
...away." This uncharacteristically harsh language betrays his attitude to the rejected script which rejected him when he finally returned to the project. "I remember reading this guy and I'd say, 'I completely disagree with this. I'm not going to do this. You can't put this in the script.'" So the hack says, "But it was in the studio notes!" And I say "I don't care. It's a bad note." And he says, "Look, it's okay." [He writes and script for them and one for us]. And I said, "No, you don't get it. It's one for me and another for me, and another for me and another for me." Why so protective? "I'm a filmmaker. If you were to go and have open heart surgery, would you follow notes from your accountant? You'd never do that."

Although Cuarón has always had the self belief to go his own way, he is full of praise for fellow Mexicans Guillermo del Toro and Alejandro González Iñárritu. "We happen to be really close friends, and together with that we've kept track of each other's work. For me... can't take a step in my filmmaking process without consulting and talking with them." Cuarón is unimpeachably appreciative of this close and "support group," as he styles it, which has been integral to the three directors' concurrent releases. *Children of Men*, *Two of Us* and *Alber*. He describes them as "sister films." "Even though they are so different, they deal with the same theme of... how reality renders a constant clash between people." Although the three friends are increasingly apart due to their respective schedules, they still rely on mutual input to shape the films they conceive in a recent editing session in Rome, Barriso and del Toro cut several minutes from each other's films. Cuarón across the Atlantic, Iñárritu found Iñárritu suggested the ending for Cuarón's own *Children of Men*.

It's tempting to suggest that Mexican cinema has never had it so good, but the director is quick to endorse those who attribute its resurgence solely to the prodigious Cuarón/del Toro/Iñárritu triumvirate. He describes the oft-overlooked Carlos Reygadas, director of *Jelito in Heaven* and *Joyous* as... "Not only one of the best directors in Mexico, but also one of the best in the world. With a growing handful of

small-sized Mexican filmmakers spreading their influence through Hollywood and beyond, there's certainly plenty to celebrate at the moment. But what does Cuarón think the future holds once the current crop of his compatriot directors begin to fade from the limelight?"

He is ready to concede that Mexican cinema "has lots of problems" but is nonetheless optimistic about its prospects for the future. "The very excited about the next generation." He's not even talking about the [Forwards] Embeco/Regadas generation. "I'm talking about the kids in their early twenties who I think are going to come out and do huge, huge things." Many critics think that the support Cuarón and his contemporaries have afforded to upcoming Mexican directors is an impressive show of altruistic solidarity. The director himself is characteristically sceptical of such a simplistic interpretation. "You could say that supporting a new generation is an act of generosity, but for me it's an act of selfishness. I want to learn from them. I want to learn how cinema is going to be in the future. I want to be a part of growing in the future."

Such has been Cuarón's impact on Mexican — and indeed world — cinema in his relatively short career, that it is already difficult to envisage the industry without him.

Even so, he is ready to reflect and reinvent his approach to film in order to reach out to a new generation of audiences. "The thing is that we are now at an age that we have been following the old masters for so long, and there's a point where you become old! There's a time when you need to turn around and seek the help of the young masters to serve the people who are coming through with new techniques and new cinematic languages. It's so important if you want to keep on going."

Cuarón is already looking forward to the next 50 or 60 of Mexican cinema, even whilst the current Golden Age is in full flow. "So many amazing filmmakers have been surpassed by history. They had a career of maybe 10 or 15 years making masterpieces, and then their films became old. In the end, the future of cinema doesn't lie with us anymore. It belongs to the next generation." ■

"A TIGHT POLITICAL THRILLER... GRITTYLY REALISTIC"

The Independent

**"ENGROSSING... SEX, DRUGS, ROCK 'N' ROLL...
AN INTOXICATING COCKTAIL OF ALL THREE"**

Sunday Telegraph



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ALEJANDRO GONZÁLEZ INÁRITU AND GABRIEL GARCÍA BERNAL
ARE THE POSTER BOYS OF A RESURGENT MEXICAN FILM INDUSTRY.
THEY TALK EXCLUSIVELY TO EW.COM.

WORDS BY MATT BOCHENSKI
PHOTOGRAPHY BY SAM CHRISTMAS



It's been six years since *Amaros Perros* broke into Western cinemas like a Guadalaupan gunslinger. Here, in Alejandro González Iñárritu's vision of a Mexico City numbed by the pains of the modern world, was a country stripped of the border town whorles and *hombres* of American cliché, replaced instead with a seething, teeming metropolis.

Building on the successes of Guillermo del Toro and Walter Salles, Iñárritu and his muse, 22-year-old former TV star Gael García Bernal, opened a door for Latin American filmmakers that has transformed perceptions of the continent, and its contribution to world cinema.

They talk to *EW* about the temptations of Hollywood, the polarised politics of Latin America, and why they wouldn't waste the power of cinema on assuaging American guilt.

On *Babel*
We are trapped in this fucking world where nobody is able to listen.
(Alejandro González Iñárritu)

EW: Some of the criticisms of *Babel*—particularly in America—have been that it's too brutal—too fatalistic. What do you make of that?

Iñárritu: Anytime you make a film there are people that will like it, people that will hate it, and people that don't give a damn. I don't think that *Babel* is trying to explain, trying to preach, trying to make propaganda. I think it goes beyond that.

I'm talking about the human condition in different cultures, different religions and different countries, and I'm saying that what happens between nations and cultures is exactly what happens between individuals. Nobody is right or wrong, bad or good; we are just trapped in this fucking world where nobody is able to listen.

Is this macabre as a world a reflection of what is going on around us? Yes. Is that uncomfortable for America? Yes. Can they presume that this is an attack against Westerners or the United States? Yes. Was that the intention of the work? No.

Bernal: There's also another side. People from other parts of the world say, "This is an attack to show that the whole world is dangerous except the United States." There are two different interpretations, but it depends on your context. It depends where you're living, and it depends what you're led day to day by the media.

But also I think that there is a positive side. In the Biblical myth of Babel, at the tower, of people trying to achieve something together and get close to God, God punished them by making different languages so that people couldn't understand each other. But the positive side to that is the fact that diversity was the spark that made people interested in the Other as well. There is that joy of interpreting what another person is saying, what another person is feeling, and of sharing those emotions and empathising with the Other. It is not a punishment, on ▼



the whole, it is actually an incentive to understand one another. That is what you see in the film.

On America

"They assume immediately that if a bullet hits someone from the United States then it must be an act of terrorism."

(Gael García Bernal)

LRUes: Was there an irony in America's reaction to Babel? And do you think it's taken an outsider to see that 9/11 was not the problem. The problem was the response to 9/11 – that actually the people who are culpable are not just the terrorists, but those who responded to terrorism as well?

Ilánúa: Some American people read the way George Bush reacts which is to say "If you are not with me, you're against me!" They feel that anything that disrespects or points out certain things that they don't like must be an attack. That's what I call guilt. It's an over-protective response.

I think that there are better ways to make a case against America than spending three years of my life making a film about it. I will not waste the power of cinema talking about that. This film is not about the United States.

Bernal: I think there's a semantic problem – a dialectic problem – that started as soon as September 11 happened: which is that now every issue can be combined with the argument of terror or protection, you know? That's why they assume immediately that if a bullet hits someone from the United States then it must be an act of terrorism. It's understood like that automatically. That's why they are building it a wall on the border between Mexico and the United States. Everything is combined with the issue of security – about protecting yourself from the Other – and it's a semantic problem I think because these issues don't have anything to do with each other.

Ilánúa: There's a point in the film that is about how different the life of an American is worth, and how much an African life is worth. It's like this balance of when an American is killed it's huge news, but when 200 people are killed in a wedding in Iraq, incidentally, it's just a small news story. You know what I mean? Or there are these massacres in African countries and nobody really gives it a lot of attention, but when one bomb in England goes off it's like a whole other issue. It's the perception of what a life is worth.

On Politics

"When the consequences of your government hit you in your house, that is when people go out in the streets."

(Alejandro González Iñárritu)

LRUes: In the UK and the US we've considered an apathetic political generation, and yet Latin America is so radicalised. Do you feel more politicised?

Bernal: Being born in a poor country gets you more in touch with the realisation that anything you do carries a political complexity to it. You are aware of that because politics has a day-to-day effect on you. If you come from an even poorer country it is way more palpable. And I'm talking about the pure political form, which is the human one, not the structural one.

My own opinion about *Amores Perros* or *Babel* is that they carry a political complexity without wanting to, you know? Because it's there, it's part of the relationship between mother and son, between one person from one country and the other person from another country, between languages. It's very difficult to not recognise it. And also it's part of the complexity that comes from a project that's an ambivalence in this one – that comes across different countries – there's a political line to it, you know? A political argument.

Ilánúa: But I want to add something to that. Half of the United States is against George Bush, right? Why haven't these people manifested themselves more aggressively in the streets? The big difference is, when the economy and the consequences of your government hit you in your house, in your pocket, in the school of your kids, that is when people go out in the streets. The thing is, this country is so rich. The other day it was Halloween in LA and the houses have, like, \$20,000 of Halloween stuff on them and I was like "This is a country of war!" They are at war, right? But because they are not personally affected it's hard to mobilise yourself. When you're in a Third World country, the economy is so thin that any decision hits you, so that makes you more aware.

Bernal: You are more aware and it's more palpable. But also it can be argued that in the political system of the United States, these people who are against George Bush have no real representation in the government. Like right now with the wall and everything, the Democrats were the ones to sign off the deal. It's all electoral games in America, but in Mexico for example, we've personally lived through two big devastations, no?

Ishtar: I saw my father all the time crying because he can never accept that money never. We never had money in our life. We were really poor, right? Because it was every day, every year. Again the dollar is blah blah blah. "So since I was a kid I am aware that that thing that that stupid asshole in government was doing was getting my father depressed and poor, and resulting in me having nothing. So I'm conscious of politics."

On Mexican Cinema
"I think Gael, Alfonso, Guillermo or Carlos Reygadas, or Rodrigo Garcia or me have been inspiring young filmmakers."
(Alejandro González Iñárritu)

LUIS: Gael, you described the current regime for Latin American film, and Mexican film in particular as a "bad." Do you think that it's translating into material change in the film industry in Mexico or is it just about your individual success? Is it making a difference?

Bernal: I think it is. I think it is.

Ishtar: In my eyes, it hasn't been a big change. I think there's a polarized vision of it. Some say "Oh, these guys are betraying Mexico by working outside. They are selling themselves—this is not Mexican cinema. Fuck them." There are others, you know, who say it's great and we are really helping. So it's polarized.

Facts show that there is not much the government is doing to really help and promote young filmmakers. Some things have happened like some tax reductions, but not as much as you would have thought six years ago. I think the most important thing—more than the government—is that Gael, Alfonso, Guillermo or Carlos Reygadas, or Rodrigo Garcia or me, have been inspiring young filmmakers, in order that they say "You know, there is a way to make films in this way." I think that, for me, is the most valuable thing. And Gael has been opening the doors for many actors to say "Thank it. I'm not trapped in this TV soap opera life. I can be an actor, and I can expect more in my life." Or directors are not going to feel trapped—they can think a little bit.

Bernal: Six years ago Amores Perros was this little film that we made with no experience whatsoever, and we arrived at Cannes with no invitations to any parties or anything, you know? We arrived at Cannes for Critics Week, which isn't even part of the official selection. So a film like Amores Perros created a huge wave, along with *Crónica de un verano*, *Y Tu Mama Tambien*. City of God, of course.

More recent movies have been reaping the benefits of Amores

Perros, which was released in a very specific time in the world, where that year there weren't so many good movies. It opened a huge pathway and now we can identify the change by just seeing how many Mexican films were in competition this year in Cannes, and not just Mexican but Latin American. Because it carries the whole continent—we share the same problems, the same context, you know?

And there has been a practical change in that nowadays you see Mexican films opening here in England, and it's not a big surprise. Before it was like "Wow! One film opened in England! Wow!" It's unheard of, you know? But now audiences all over the world and in Mexico are more open to the possibility of seeing a film in Spanish. That is an industrial change that the audience has provoked.

On Hollywood
"I think we're all open to the possibility of doing whatever story interests us in whatever context it comes from."
(Gael García Bernal)

LUIS: Given the success that you've had—both together and apart—does it become easier to pursue this kind of independent ethos? Or is there more pressure on you to take a Hollywood payday?

Bernal: I think that because we're doing the things we want, you might as well just keep doing that all along. At the same time, I think we're all open to the possibility of doing whatever story interests us in whatever context it comes from.

The whole Hollywood experience carries a different weight on a director or on an actor, no? As an actor, you know, if you do a big Hollywood movie it doesn't only imply the movie itself, but also the promotion and the type of burden that you have to carry.

But like *Diego*? For example, it is the most un-Hollywood film you could think of because it's in different languages, and yet at the same time it was done in the studio system. That's what's great about finding these loopholes.

Ishtar: I sold the rights to distribute the film, but it wasn't developed or decided in a studio. They bought the rights but I made it independently. It's about working with what is good about the studio system—working with them, but not with them. And something that I think is amazing about Gael is that he has become a world recognizable actor without ever doing a Hollywood film. He has broken the paradigm that if you want to be recognized worldwide, you have to be in a Hollywood explosion. It's not true. ■

Words by Andrea Kerkend Photography by Martin Zepfner

INTERGALACTIC GIRL

Rinka Kikuchi blasts off into hyperspace







Japan. The home of schoolgirls in sailor suits, all bare thighs and gaggles of men who mean business and read comics for kicks. A place where cartoonists make porn, a people rooted in impeccable etiquette, shaken by teen-punk excess.

This isn't Japan. This is Soho, London. Yet sitting across from Rinka Kikuchi, breakout star of *Babel*, and slender dose of impenetrable Japan, is to feel lost. Chain-smoking her fourth cigarette, all black motorcycle leather and designer boots, there is no girlish naivety here, no Kawaii cuteness. On the table lies a Hello Kitty bag, ergonomically tailored for a toddler, yet home to a pair of designer sunglasses and box of Marlboro reds, serious cigarettes for a serious woman.

We're here to chat, but we don't share a single word. Between us, a woman scribbling on a pad is designing Rinka's fluent soliloquy to a few irrelevant symbols. This style of communication is the world that Rinka brings to life in *Babel*. As Chieko, the deaf-mute teenager haunted by her mother's suicide and repressed by a need for human connection, Rinka's rare physical situation evokes scripted speech like a crutch for the inept. In a city she cannot communicate with, her frustration is our culture shock.

She was the part after a greeting, your long audition. Originally, director Alejandro González Iñárritu wanted an authentic deaf actress, but was won over by Rinka's commitment to the role — impressed that she learned sign language from scratch. Why did she want it so badly?

Rinka Kikuchi: "For me, cinema is like a Bible. I learn so many things from films, especially from Alejandro's films. *Amores Perros* and *21 Grams* inspired me. After seeing them I felt hope — that I would survive tomorrow, that I would keep on living. Then I heard the news that Alejandro was making a film in Japan, and they were looking for a young actress. I knew I had to take that opportunity because it might be the first and the last chance for us to work together."

Slent, aggressive, dragged up, strong out, Chieko is our ticket to the inner circle of Japanese youth. Black leather kiki and drug-fueled teen idols divide a generation hell-bent on rebellion from a city built on good-for-business conformity; this is González Iñárritu's — *Babel*'s — Tokyo. But just how real is it?

Kikuchi: "That image of youth culture in the film may exist, but it's not like that all the time. Some parts of society are like that, some not, it depends. Individual people have their own culture, their own world, and belong to their own society. The important thing is that you should see the world created by filmmakers, even if it's not real, not just stick to and reproduce the reality and society of Japan. It's more important that we create the world that's desired by the filmmaker." ■

Tokyo is a beacon of mimetic style. Gwen Stefani understood the power of the hip-lecter coming from the girls of Harajuku when she co-opted their style into her own brand of superfunk. But while we stock up on Japanese fishnets, teenagers in Tokyo, kicking Miles and spring Starbucks, are taking breakdancing tips from their cousins in the Bronx, or dreaming of David Beckham. So who, exactly, is loving whom?

Kikuchi: "I'm not sure how trendy Japanese culture is because I never think of it as that way. Japan is very different to Western countries, because all the time we must think about how to live together with other people, not just by ourselves. How people think about us, how they watch us, is very important to us. It's like we're looking into a mirror of ourselves. All the time we are really conscious of how our image projects to other people, and maybe that's different to Western cultures. I'm surprised so many people love Japanese culture, and see our youth as trendsetters. For us Japanese, we look to Western cultures – they are trendsetters to us."

The Shibuya District in Tokyo is a melting pot of craned-up fashioners, individualism on steroids. But look a little closer and independence wears a group identity. The *Gyaru* girls' uniform is a California tan, Barbie-blonde curls and swatch platinums, while *Gothic Lolitas* take their lead from Victorian litch dolls. Why, then, have Tokyo's fashion subcultures come to define a certain brand of non-conformed conformity?



Kikuchi: "Fashion is a way for a person to form their identity. It should depend on your personality and on the individual. Individuals have their own way to express and find their identity, and for some people what they wear makes them feel part of a special world. Or if you want to make an artistic expression, you may try and look very different to other people. Japanese people are very fashionable, conscious of how to wear and show off their clothes, and that's a form of expression. If I wore very elegant clothes I feel, Oh, I'm quite cute today, but I'm sure that's the same for girls in the West: you can express a different personality from inside with what you wear."

Every nation, including Japan, is littered with its fair share of stereotypes. Some are worn with pride while others have faded and mutated. *Ghetto* is mediated to us through images and come from racism, hate and dark corners of Japanese schoolgirls as fettered, sexualised and stereotyped creatures. But in a world that cranks wheels to divide nations, invert all stereotypes simply paydine in dragage?

Kikuchi: "Many people think of Japanese girls in a way that's different from reality. Some people think Japanese girls obey the commands of other people, are polite, quiet and very feminine-like. Some of them are like that but some of them are completely different. When people think wrongly in a certain way, that's a problem. We can't say that each country has a different type of people. If you have prejudice it's difficult to communicate, because prejudice is an obstacle to communicating properly. That's why travel is such a good thing. If you speak with people who have different cultures and languages, they don't have a fixed idea of what, say, a Japanese person is like. If they do still have prejudice then it's difficult to communicate."

Silko leaves in a cloud of dissipating cigarette smoke, an Eastern, alien, icon – the living embodiment of a world that fades past our eyes in a neon blur. But it's good to know, as two youth cultures gaze adoringly at each other over vast distances, that not everything gets lost in translation ■



KIDS
FROM
PARIS
PHOTOGRAPHY BY
JONATHAN



Model - 180cm Hideo Yoda / Jacket - Pige Lecomte / Trousers - Pige Lecomte

RYO



T-shirt in Kishiko | Skirt in Candy Bop | Bag in The Berry Shop | Accessories in 200

DAKKI



Shirt — Hollywood Beauty Market | Skirt — Jil Black | Boots — Anna Sui | Bag — Lush Victoria | Cap — Moma

— KUR



But in Vivienne Westwood's Britain — George Cost

KOSAKU



Shoes — Secondhand / Tights — my orange socks / Skirt — Group / Shoes — Adidas / Bag — Koto

BY REANA





**ALL YOUR
BAPE
ARE
BELONG
TO US.**

WORDS BY NEON KELLY
IMAGES BY MORPHY RICHARDS

Legendary fashion label A Bathing Ape is part of the cultural dialogue between East and West. But over 10 years after its conception in the streets of Harajuku, we ask James Lavella if the brand is just one more monkey business?

For many Westerners, contemporary Japan is a marriage of Oriental influences and Occidental consumerism. Even when we poke far at the country's eccentricities, we do so with a veiled respect. Across the world's media, the unspoken agreement is that Tokyo is the global capital of cultural cool.

The problem is that geographical distance confuses our sense of temporal judgment. When some new brand ships in from Japan, we rush to embrace it, to get in on the act before the excitement cools down. What the Harajuku scene does today, we do tomorrow, but sometimes we forget to ask ourselves "Why?"

In the dog days of the twentieth century, A Bathing Ape established itself as the hottest export around. Producing designer hip-hop clothes in strictly limited editions, BAPE's wares were only available from a smattering of official stores — mostly in Asia — where customers were restricted from buying more than two or three items. This embargo was enforced for a good reason: these days BAPE T-shirts have been known to fetch up to \$10,000 a piece.

A Bathing Ape was created by Nigo — a DJ and designer who, at the start of the '90s, was an 18-year-old student and free DJMC freestyling a career as a journalist. Whilst studying fashion editing at Tokyo's Bunkyo Fukuro Gakuin college, he became friends with Juno, the man behind the Undercover brand. His new buddy introduced him to the industry's heavyweights, and together the pair developed a taste for clubbing. While Nigo's

roadside attendance suffered, a busy social life saw him donning glasses with the likes of Heide Fukuoka — the successful DJ/cum-designer whose own style would later heavily influence BAPE.

After leaving college the two men found part-time jobs on long-running fashion mag *Popeye* and GIVE Nigo got his break as a stylist, but he and Juno were also put in charge of monitoring the latest trends — a position that placed their fingers on the pulse of Tokyo's youth. Armed with this knowledge the duo went into business, and 1993 saw the opening of what was essentially the first BAPE outlet — a quest MTL shop in the chic Harajuku district. They called it *Nowhere, Ltd.*, a name that aptly foreshadowed an empire of hard-to-find items; even today BAPE's official *Busy Work Shops* are notable for their subtle appearance and near total lack of branding. Their locations are scarcely publicised, betrayed only by a line of glammed-up shoppers waiting to get in.

For its first few months *Nowhere* simply sold other designers' labels, but soon sales prompted the partners to start their own line of clothing. Here was the true birth of A Bathing Ape, characterised in response to Nigo's obsession with the Planet of the Apes films: he and Juno would knock off T-shirts in limited batches of 30, selling half the stock and giving the rest to friends. Even at this early stage, Nigo knew a smart opportunity when he saw one: through a mutual acquaintance, he began pressing on BAPE MC to Kamekura, singer with the punk band *Converles*. Kamekura wore Bathing Ape on his gigs, and the band's profile rocketed even as the actual clothes remained near-impossible to acquire — a business model that Nigo has used ever since.

It didn't take long before people began to notice BAPE. Graffiti artists Stash and Future 2000 were early visitors to *Nowhere*, swiftly followed by Bustle Boy Mike D, and James Lavella — DJ and creator of the hit Wax record label. Soon these figures had formed a loose collective, a gang of creative minds whose output encompassed everything from hip-hop rights to collectible vinyl bags.

"We just used to feed off each other," recalls Lavella. "We were trying to change the world, trying to do things that we believed in. It was basically a very small group of people that were trying to start their own creative enterprises where they weren't any rules. There was no boss; there was Mike D doing *Grand Theft Auto* in LA, and there was Nigo doing Bathing Ape in Tokyo. It was about people's living creative ideas, trying to make them happen where these ideas weren't usually able to happen in the past — basically saying what you could get away with."

In the eyes of some, this was BAPE's golden age. By the end of the decade its patron had spent in fashion cognoscenti in the West, but the label itself remained a distinctly Japanese property, embedded in the roots of Tokyo street culture. A Bathing Ape was certainly no longer an underground

“We were trying to change the world, trying to do things that we believed in. Trying to start creative enterprises where there weren’t any rules. It was about people sharing certain ideas, basically seeing what you could get away with.”

phenomena, but few people could have predicted the way in which the brand would explode across the first years of the new millennium.

“I think it was very cool when it first came to Western eyes at the end of the ‘90s,” says Lauren Cochrane, deputy editor of *AD*. “Then it had a bit of a wobble – it became associated with Slippy, which is a bit of an old man’s sister brand. Now it’s been reinvented in that shiny shiny blog background. I think that Nigo, or whoever it is that actually designs the things these days, totally plugs into that American with a thing a best thing. It’s kind of the hyper-American – *Rady Warkel* would go nuts for it.”

Since the turn of the century, Nigo’s projects have included a separate clothing line for ladies, the founding of the Footlocker shoe store chain, and an advertising campaign for Pepsi. There’s a BAPE shop, a BAPE cafe – even a BAPE-sponsored pro wrestling event. Most significantly of all, 2003 witnessed the creation of the Billionaire Boys Club, a new fashion label founded by Nigo in conjunction with producer Pharos Williams. But for James Lavelle, the widespread success has come at the cost of the label’s original spirit.

“I always thought it was going to be slightly more aggressive, to be honest. It’s become, in the, of late, more about commercialism than it has been about heading new paths. And at the time when I was involved, what was unique about Bathing Ape, and what was unique about all of the things we were doing, was that no one could understand what it was. I don’t think in the early days anybody could

have expected what has happened. I don’t know if Nigo did or didn’t, I don’t know if that was his game plan. It certainly didn’t feel like that at the time.”

How are we to judge the development of BAPE? It’s certainly tempting to draw parallels between the company’s growth and the evolution of hip-hop culture – from the old school, anti-establishment vibes of Public Enemy, also the Run-DMCs through to the temporary gangsta rap and its materialist obsessions. On the other hand, Nigo’s payphone could just be the fashion equivalent of post-coffee music fans, bitching and crying when their favourite band attains commercial success.

Maybe there’s truth on both sides. It doesn’t feel that Nigo himself reserves something of an egoism. As a businessman and designer he is clearly at the top of his game, yet earlier this year he decided to have his teeth covered with diamonds – hardly the best indicator of a guy with his feet on the ground. The name ‘Bathing Ape’ is itself partly derived from the Japanese expression *nukeya ya tsukue* ‘to bathe in lukewarm water’. In a 2003 interview, Nigo explained the reference to a reporter from *Japan Today*:

“It’s a comment on kids in Tokyo. They’re shallow, they take things for granted and they’re not street savvy. It’s sort of nice for them to be wearing my clothing. I’m trying to show how nice people they are. Being independent minded. They have no shame, no goals, because they’re just too comfortable. Like bathing in lukewarm water.”

Do we praise his honesty, or condemn him for using his bigged-up teeth to bite the hands that feed him? “He has a point, doesn’t he?” argues Cochrane. “It’s all about creating sheep, but for sheep to come you’ve got to give them something they want. He’s broke their obsessions and blown it up. That’s why I think BAPE is so successful – it’s not built on something he doesn’t know.”

When somebody shells out for one of Nigo’s T-shirts, they’re paying for more than an item of clothing, it’s the cultural codes that BAPE fans want, and this engagement is really no different from any other high-end designer brand. If nothing else, A Bathing Ape has achieved its identity of its own, even if it’s one that lacks its former jagged edge.

“I completely understand where Nigo’s at, and that’s really cool for him,” concludes Lavelle. “In my head and I admire his achievements massively, it’s just not necessarily where I would like to personally be with what I’m doing. Nigo has a great ability to imitate and I’m sure that at a point it makes sense to him, there will be another Bathing Ape mutation. I think he’s a very clever man.” ■

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By 2025, the Japanese robot industry will be worth almost £27 billion. Robots will dance with you, live with you, perhaps even love you. But as technology blurs the boundaries between science and fiction, we celebrate a more innocent era of human-robot relations. From the heart of a shimmering modern Mecca, a little slice of hi-fi soul.

HEART

NAME: CHIEF SMOKY
 FIRST MANUFACTURED: 1960's
 MANUFACTURED BY: HASKINS
 HEIGHT: 10cm
 POWER: BATTERIES OPERATED



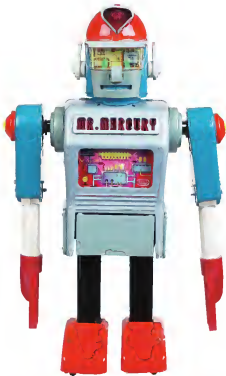
NAME: **ROBEY**
 FIRST MANUFACTURED: **1955**
 MANUFACTURED BY: **ROBEY**
 HEIGHT: **13.5cm**
 POWER: **BATTERY OPERATED**



NAME: **ROBEY**
 FIRST MANUFACTURED: **1950**
 MANUFACTURED BY: **ROBEY**
 HEIGHT: **10 INCHES**
 POWER: **BATTERY OPERATED**



NAME: MR. MERCURY
 FIRST MANUFACTURED: 1959
 MANUFACTURED BY: MRC TOY CO.
 HEIGHT: 11 INCHES
 POWER: BATTERIES OFFERED SEPARATELY





FUR GAME

WORDS BY PERS TOWNLEY
ILLUSTRATIONS BY COUNT LEOPOLD VON BERTCHOLD

Hunting: crime against nature, or the ultimate expression of man's mastery over the beasts? Either way, if you get your kicks from killing our fur-clad friends, here's some helpful slaughtering suggestions.

Taking up arms against animals is a thriving pastime. Should you wish to decorate the space above your mantelpiece with the head of something beautiful, rare and defenceless, the only limit is your imagination and your wallet. Everywhere you look there's no shortage of corporations and countries ready to award your cash in return for the chance to study that bloodstain. The question is, with so much choice, which wildlife are you going to annihilate first?

SEALS

WHERE: CANADA / NORWAY

The truly intrepid hunter wants to pit his wits against nature's greatest predators — animals of razor-sharp teeth and unbridled cunning. Only then can he justify his place at the top of the food chain. Or, he could just club a seal.

Until recently the iconic Canadian seal calf had been a victim of the outrage it provoked in Europe and America, banned by farcos in favour of more peaceful human-animal relations. That all changed in April 2004 when the government gave the green light for up to 350,000 harp seals to meet their bloody maker.

It was the intensity of the call that shocked — over 2,000 hunters using 350 boats massed 10,000 seals per daylight hour. Though this year's quota has been reduced to 325,000, such good intentions have been largely offset by recent reports of seals being clubbed and skinned alive.

If this sort of thing floats your boat, take a long hard look in the mirror, then contact Norfisher. This Norwegian company specialises in seal hunting. Prox, encouraged by Norway's Minister of Fisheries Svein Ludvigsen's 2001 plans to make seal killing a tourist attraction, Greenpeace branded the plan "an environmental disaster", but if blubber don't scare you, 4550 will guarantee at least two jobs.

www.sealinfo.com

LEOPARDS

WHERE: AFGHANISTAN / NAMIBIA

Rare, threatened and infinitely better looking in the wild than as a rug on your floor, leopards nevertheless remain under siege. In July of this year, in the Pinar mountains region of northwestern Afghanistan, the slaughter and sale of a snow leopard's body parts on the black market caught the attention of the reports press.

This incredibly rare animal is now seen as a lucrative bounty for Afghan poachers and, indeed, international foreign hunters in the hellish provinces of this war-torn country, despite the five-year ban on big cat hunting imposed by Afghan president, Hamid Karzai.

If you don't fancy the war difficulties, however, you could always join a more relaxed and organized leopard hunt in Namibia. Though thankfully limited to two or three plants a year, *Crocidora* Safari will ponder to your steady demands over a 12-day course. They're also able to organize bow-hunting trips should you want to get all "revel on some big cat ass."

Of course, bringing your catch back home requires strict permit controls and a bit more cash, but where there's a will, there's a way. www.gobowhunting.com

RADIOACTIVE WOLVES

WHERE: CHERNOBYL

Why not up the stakes and combine your love of wildlife admiration with man-made environmental disaster? Since the radioactive fallout from the Chernobyl reactor explosion in 1986, the landscape around this hell on earth is still lethal to most forms of life. Despite this, reports of wolves and bears returning to the area are becoming common. "There is no emptiness in nature," explains zoologist Viktor Davin, "it is the wolf that rules in the reserve."

The 200 wolves in this, the world's first radioactive nature park, coexist with radioactive bears and radioactive moose, some radioactive reindeer species. As they forage the herbivores and berries who risked a living on this barren wasteland, humans of poaching have also arrived.

There are those who claim that if you have the cash you can hunt wolves from the comfort of a hired Russian helicopter, in plentiful supply from the tourist operators who run guided trips to the area. If you're prepared to persevere, start your journey with the Ukraine-based CWM expedition, though we're in no way suggesting they offer the chance to hunt a radioactive wolf. So it's purely a matter of speculation that our advice is to head there at night and see if they really do glow in the dark. www.ukrains.com/ru/en/ru/en_3.html

COWS

WHERE: CAMBODIA

The Cambodian *baouk* myth is now of such traveler legend that you almost have to be true.

If you have the patience to negotiate the bad directions, head for the Thunder Black Shooting Range, Pivon Peak, located off the road towards Pochentong airport. Here, they'll be only too happy to let you up from a head-spinning collection of hardware including AK-47 machine guns, the US stockpile of M16s, acquired from the country's bloody past, and a seemingly endless supply of black oil Chinese hand grenades (in more \$10 to risk an (R)worthy mauling).

It's here that you'll encounter the *baouk*-cow legend. In times past (and even now, allegedly, if the tribe's good enough) there was a slingshot of ordnance versus *baouk*, starting with a cult pistol and a corkscrew, and going all the way up to the infrared *baouk* and a belted water buffalo. Though a 340 rocket-propelled grenade is still a pinch at \$200, urban myths, and common bloody human decency, hint at not pursuing this enquiry.

WHALES

WHERE: NORWAY / JAPAN

If there was a league table of public outrage, harpooning whales would be up there at the top. Even so, the planet's largest mammal has a long tradition of ending up on the dinner plate or as intensive medicines.

If you can't fancy actually pulling the trigger, you could keep your bets off getting up close and personal with an act of whaling witnessed by going a Norwegian whale watching excursion. In July 2006, a group of tourists traveling to the Arctic Lobster Islands were evenly winning a peaceful mass whale, with a whaling linerful of passengers and reported it in full view of 80 horrified passengers. "It wasn't pretty sight," confirmed a planktonologist, and then, with the matter of all indisputable, "It's really wasn't what we came to see."

Norway resumed commercial whaling in 1993, and by 2005 they'd bagged a whopping 1,052 minke, 30 per cent up on the previous year. Unsurprisingly, they rejected the 1986 ban issued by the International Whaling Commission.

But if you're determined to kill at least one whale before you die, you might want to contact Ryudo Senpaku Kaisha Ltd, the company that owns and charters scores of whaling boats, but is still whaling from a few at a time by the Herring Society. Perhaps you can start as a dockhand before working your way up to the business end of a harpoon. The Japanese Whaling Society might also be able to help with enquiries. ■

www.whaling.jp

Shock and gore.

WORDS BY VINCE BUZZARD



ARTIST SANDOW BIRK'S NEW EXHIBITION TAKES A LONG HARD LOOK AT THE DEPRAVITIES OF THE WAR ON TERROR.

Sandow Birk wants you to think about war. And he wants you to think about it hard. Following his groundbreaking operation of *Darkness Over Comedy* — with a dystopian America as its burning backdrop — Sandow's now turned his attention to the Middle East. His new collection, *The Depravities of War*, references actual images from the war on terror to portray (but is all its) ghostly, unspeakable and debaucherous horror.

LWLives: What's the main inspiration behind *The Depravities of War*?

Sandow Birk: The project relates to works of the past to the subreality of war and suffering through the ages. Many people know the story prison "The Murders of War" from 1933 years ago — the late 1930s — with all their great depictions of brutality and suffering. But what is much less known is that David's work was inspired by the work of a French artist, Jacques Callot, who was working in the late 1600s, 1700 years before David. Callot did a series of prints entitled "The Murders of War". So you got David doing a series of prints about war that compared David to do a series of prints about war 170 years later, and that led to me doing a series of prints about war 170 years later than that. ▼



LWilles: Where do the images in the project come from?

Birke: They come from great sources. Even though they are a bit randomly selected, by the print making process of woodblock printing, all of the violence and tracks and pictures of people and scenes of humiliation and warfare are all taken directly from their photographs of war. They're not scenes that I made up, they are just composed by me into more interesting images.

LWilles: Do you think artists have a responsibility to be vocal about war?

Birke: The romantic myth of the artist is that they are the conscience and the voice of society. Think of the questions in terms of music, which is a good analogy, there's a sort of an obligation to sing about the war if you're not, a kind of sing about whatever it wants to sing about. A kind of choice to sing about the war if it wants to, though. It's a valid topic in the sea of things to sing or quiet about.

LWilles: Are Abu Ghraib and the horrors of war inspiring in any way?

Birke: The events of this war and of Abu Ghraib are inspiring to me in that they make me so angry, so disappointed. It's an appalling war for so many reasons, and it's wicked to me, and this feeling of despair and helplessness and inability are in some not very complicated to me - am willing to make work that addresses that. ■

'The Deprivations of War' consists of 16 large-scale woodcut prints, each measuring 44 x 96 inches
The exhibition opens at the California Clark Gallery in San Francisco on March 22, 2007



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GOV IN AT WWW.LITTLEWHITELIES.CO.UK TO READ EXCLUSIVE FEATURES AND INTERVIEWS, SPECIAL COMPETITIONS, CHECK OUT OUR BACK ISSUES ARCHIVE AND GENERALLY HAVE AN UPTO-DATE MINUTE W/2 ON PISTOLS, EVENTS AND ALL THE LATEST FUN AND CHALLENGES

BUT THAT'S NOT ALL, OUR ONLINE STORE SELLS SUBSCRIPTIONS, BACK ISSUES, T-SHIRTS AND LIMITED-EDITION SCREEN PRINTS OF CLASSIC LINE-ARTWORK, YES!

A L.A. Times review will not be asked and by any paradoxical ratio. Just as movies are about more than the two hours you spend sitting in the cinema, our reviews are a chance to talk about much more than the immediate experience of the film in question. There are many different aspects of the movie-going experience and we will embrace them all.

Anticipation
Over-wound six months for a home office behemoth? Kind a break that you loved and nervously watched the widespread item pleasantly surprised by an off-the-radar independent? Anticipation plays a crucial role in your reaction to a movie. Rather than ignore it, we think it should be measured and acknowledged as part of the movie-going experience.

Marked out of 5

Enjoyment
All other things aside, how did you feel for those two hours? Were you glued to your seat? Did the film speak to your soul? Was it uplifting, disappointing, or just plain boring? Were you even awake?

Marked out of 5

In Retrospect
Great movies live with you; you carry them around wherever you go and the things they say stay the way you see the world. Did this movie fade away so was every moment instead into your rotation? Was it a quick fix action flick, good for a lazy Sunday afternoon? Or the first day of the rest of your life? Did you love it with a fury only to fall in love with a passion? Or did that first love fade away like a distant remnant?

Marked out of 5

CHAPTER THREE IN WHICH WE DISCUSS THE MEANS OF COMMON INTEREST INSPIRED BY OUR FEATURE FILM



FLAGS OF OUR FATHERS

THE
BEST
OF
THE
WARRIOR

DIRECTED BY
JIM JARROLD
CASTING BY
JIM JARROLD
EDITED BY
JIM JARROLD
PRODUCED BY
JIM JARROLD

So you've seen

Jarhead. And *Saving Private Ryan*. Full Metal Jacket too. You've even caught *The Battle of Algiers* on DVD (kudos). You know exactly that war movies are just a series of stylistic tropes, archetypal scenes and potted ciphers. You know about the Sergeant, the first liner in the bottle, the badman, the cheer, and the snappy "We're Half" sermonizing that makes a victim out of every soldier and a scapegoat out of some malleable evil that's suspiciously devoid of political will. "Yes," you say, further convinced, "war movies suck."

But then along comes one from Clint Eastwood. Yes, Eastwood. That 76-year-old Republican buzzard. He's called *Flags of our Fathers*, and it's about the men who were famously photographed raising the US flag on Iwo Jima.

Mount Suribachi. You can see the breast-beating already, and you know you're going to hate it.

But then the opening credits roll, the Warner logo hits the screen and something strange happens. Eastwood's first *War* movie trembles through a few bars of World War II anthem "Till Wee Walk Alone" (the end credits list the singer as one "Don Ranner", but you're not buying it). You're unnerved. The movie proper starts. Three soldiers climb a duff-laden Suribachi. "Typical," you think. "Can't even shell out for some decent sets." But then a pullback reveals a deliberately ersatz mountain in the middle of a packed football stadium. You're lost.

Eastwood, it seems, is one step ahead of you. He's jumping, you soon discover, out over the

chronological map. One minute we're out in the Pacific with our boys Doc (Ryan Reynolds), Rene (Jesse Bradford) and Hagen (Adam Beach). The next minute we're back in the US on a fundraising tour for the Army. Then we're at the end of the war. Then the start again. And then back in the Pacific. It's deftly done, and you're finally convinced. You see what he's doing, or at least, you think you do.

He's turning the war movie on its head. He's liquidizing it. He's shooting it in gorgeous greys and blacks bleached shadows. With multiple narrators, with CGI with blood-splatters, weeping mothers, dying fathers and the latest political rage of obedient cannon fodder. He's searching for something, on screen, right in front of your eyes. The truth, perhaps.

He doesn't quite get there. But then no one ever does. And still you feel, by the end, that he's done something impossible. He's made an angry political war movie, in this time of times, that somehow has a soft sympathetic heart. And even more impossible: he's made a war movie that matters. Kevin Maher

Anticipation. Sweet. Another war movie about our boys, and stuff. Yay? Gee.

Enjoyment. Gee's thick. Eastwood, intelligent, provoked, stirred and, finally, moved. Fine.

In Retrospect. Award. Bristling? Yes. Meeting? Too. Conventional? Too. Not. sometimes, really, those aren't bad things. Fine.



THE UPSIDE OF ANGER

Kevin Costner

DIRECTED BY
Mike Finkel
STARRING
Kevin Costner,
Joan Allen, Lili
Chiklisman

Denny (Kevin Costner)

is a blue-collar ex-baseball star who, when not in front of the TV with one hand down his pants, hosts a red-to-talk show. He lives in a pit surrounded by boxes of baseballs that he signs and sells online — a bitter-sweet reminder of the dreams he once had.

Around the corner of out-maneuvered suburban Terry Ann Wohlhayer's (Joan Allen) husband has left her for his secretary. Denny kindly offers to let her drink with him, even though Terry's four daughters ("One of them hates me, and the other three are working on it") form a conglomerate of

surrogacy to their mother, who lives each day through a new cocktail. But as they combine life in a kaleidoscope of teenage angst, it's Denny who becomes the peevish suit that buffers her from torment. As tension distills, they become lovers, and nurse each other through life's longest hangover.

The Upside of Anger is Allen's stage. She shows the full fury of a woman scorned while retaining a wonderfully dry humor with a dull but delectable twinkle in her eye. Costner is gently endearing, giving a compassionate performance that proves he shines when he steps

GHOSTS

DIRECTED BY
Nick Broomfield
STARRING Ali Gao Lin

Ali Gao Lin

Even though he's

put his trusty boom-mike and headphones aside for this recreation of the 2004 Merseyside Bay cocking tragedy, the poster-boy of British documentary, Nick Broomfield, has certainly retained his sense of social justice and a dedication to uncovering the roots of small-scale corruption.

Not a million miles from Michael Winterbottom's *In This World*, which itself documented the ordeals of immigrants choosing to take the arduous and often painful journey to Europe, Broomfield's film successfully demystifies the blighted dreams of a group of Chinese doctors whose only intention was to make money while retaining a sense of dignity and self-worth.

Though the performances from the non-professional cast (especially Ali Gao Lin, who has first-hand experience of the six-month clandestine trek from China to the UK) are uniformly

excellent, the problem lies with the fact that *Ghosts* would have perhaps worked better as an enquiry into the aftermath of the tragedy than this well-rendering, if lay-the-numbers-rendering of its prelude. That said, Broomfield's subtle and objective treatment of the material certainly shows another, perhaps more plaintive, side to a director who's not particularly known for his restraint. **Dave Karger**

Anticipation: Love him or hate him, Broomfield is an important filmmaker. **Three**

Enjoyment: Well, make it a little to love. **Three**

In Retrospect: Michael Moore's *Sicko* asks Britain's Ministry (Canadian Forces) killed John Candy, on Broomfield's show will. Another warning to his love. **Three**



An interview with Mike Binder, writer and director of *The Upside of Anger*.

LWLies: Where did you get the idea for the film?

Binder: Well, the very first idea came when I was sitting in a limo with Joan Allen called *The Pretenders*, and she asked if I would ever write a comedy for her. I told her I would love to. I started writing that particular piece and it became more of a *comedy than a comedy*. I wanted to write a piece about divorce, sadness and misplaced anger – but really the whole film was written with Joan in mind from the start.

LWLies: Did you write the character around her, or did you make her become the character?

Binder: I kind of merged the two. The character of Terry became a real person for me, and I wanted Joan to become all those things that I thought she could be – funny, sexy and sexy, but also very real. I feel the film is very much a subtle about misplaced anger. It comes out in *Anger* and some people got what I was doing and some people didn't because they took the ending very literally and overrated debating what really should have happened.

LWLies: Do you think that somewhere along the way Terry realizes what has happened to her husband?

Binder: She spends a long time being really angry about a lot of things she knows nothing about, and I think that's a very common thing that happens to all of us. On a personal, gutted and polarized level, we all do that – we're all just human and we never know the real story about anything.

LWLies: Did you write Kevin's role with him in mind?

Binder: No, not really. I was in a restaurant in Hollywood once at the height of his attention and he came up to me and told me he liked my standup. I was really flattered that Kevin Costner, 'the movie star', liked my stuff. He gave me his home number and told me that if I ever wanted to get together to work he would. I never called him, because I thought, 'What do you say to Kevin Costner?' But when I had wrote the script, I wrote in a couple of my favorite baseball players, and at last I remembered one of mine of Kevin's other roles. But then I assumed he wouldn't want to do it as he had already taken on so many baseball player roles before. So I decided to make the baseball a background story, and called him up.

LWLies: What made you write yourself into the character of Shop?

Binder: I'm the best director that I know. I love to act, but I don't really like acting in other people's movies. The days are too long, and so if I can think of an offbeat role I'll go for it. Also I didn't want to book with some actor who was going to sit there and tell me how to make the character more likable. I didn't want another soft guy. There's a moment where he refers to one of the girls as, 'a piece of ass', and he tells Shop not to be mad with him. But long before Shop probably would have been like with that, but not anymore. I needed that character to show Denny's growth. *Wesley Kujawa*

out of the spotlight. The film occurs more estrogen than a morning-after pill, but Denny uses the support of his friend Shop (Binder himself) to escape the female world he craves. Shop allows into the story as a noty-looking scumbag whose life is dictated by his groin, but as his outer layers fall away, we see Shop is harmless – a pathetic benchmark to measure how far Denny has traveled from his former self.

Though the usual clichés – pregnancy, unrequited love, sexual deviance and sudden illness – are scattered throughout a film that would be better

balanced without them, Binder still makes smart use of them to exemplify the serendipitous nature of life, and he tops it all with a beautiful ending that leaves a silently weeping Terry on her knees in despair, needs right.

Anticipation: Kevin Costner as an ex baseball player? That's novel. **Three**

Enjoyment: Mega peaks and troughs of tears and laughter. **Four**

In Retrospect: Shop, Jack, listen and think. **Five**



SHORTBUS

PRODUCED BY
John Cameron Mitchell
SCREENPLAY: SOO YIN
LEE, PAUL LUDWIG
DIRECTOR: John Cameron Mitchell

COMING
TO THEATERS

In the opening five

minutes of *Shortbus*, director John Cameron Mitchell tosses the viewer's face right between the thighs of his movie in a way that gives short shaft to the sexual introvert. It's a brave, heady sequence which lays down the gauntlet for the ensuing sexual freestyle as one character ejaculates directly onto an abstract painting, while another disproves the old schoolboy theory that you need to have a no removed to reach your own dick.

However, if this provokes images of the philosophically impenetrable *Blue Velvet* in which enlightened riders can't rat without bleat-quoting *Baudelaire*, then

you're in luck. *Shortbus* is a witty, wise and - most crucially - human portrait of the sexual lives of a group of bewildered New Yorkers.

Relationships counselor Sofie (Sook-Yin Lee) has never had an orgasm. When she admits this to gay couple Jesse and James, they invite her to *Shortbus*, a club that deals strictly in the art of sexual liberation, whose clientele ranges from transsexual Jewish performance artists to the aging, homosexual ex-Meyer of New York. What follows is a Technicolor odyssey into the realms of her deepest cravings via the lives of a number of cross-sectioned individuals.

With a superbly colated script and resourceful direction, not only does the film allow you to successfully befriend this group of genuinely lovable characters, it proves that there is depth to the current penchant for intertexted ensemble narratives if the focus is kept tight enough (in this case, the nature of human connection).

With the Big Apple innovatively rendered as a digitally animated sexual playing field, and the brilliant use of New York five-folk quartet *Animal Collective* on the soundtrack, *Shortbus* inexorably emits bursts of organic energy which really get under your skin, and

make up for the somewhat half-baked disavowment of "we all got some in the end." **Dave Karger**

Anticipation: *Hard to be malicious? We'll have none of that. Fear*

Enjoyment: *If you don't enjoy this you're either callous or infertile. Fear*

In Retrospect: *About as concerning a portrait of modern New York as friends with porn. But still, that's rock on. Good. These*



US VS JOHN LENNON

Documentary
1990

DIRECTED BY
Gareth and John
Sutcliffe
STARRING John
Lennon, Yoko Ono
Gita Shale

With a panoply of interviews, news footage and music video-bites, *US vs John Lennon* is a typetonic composition of assorted media which journeys choppy through 10 years of political unrest. The film both documents and celebrates the anti-war activism of 'the intellectual Beatle' during the turbulent political milieu of the '60s and '70s, and traces the apolymous hero's perilous transition from famous pacifist to enemy of the state.

There are recordings from anti-Vietnam rallies and peace concerts; interviews with radicals such as the Black Panther Party co-founder Bobby Seale and activist Ron Kovic, as well as a series of in-depth, confessional accounts from Yoko Ono, who shares her memories of Lennon's persecution at the hands of the US government.

Yet beyond the impressive catalogue of interviewees, the asty editing and the nostalgic revisiting of long hair and free love, there's little narrative development. As public anger towards the Vietnam War subsides, Lennon proves an increasingly hazardous threat to the Nixon administration, and the target of the CIA's sinister observation. In an age of Watergate, secret surveillance and whistleblowing, this should be an unsettling thought, but the tension never rises, and feelings of disquiet fail to unfold. What could have been a disturbing study of Orwellian control by a government in crisis, never reaches beyond a cursory record of a pop star gone serious.

In fact, recollections of the superficial could well be directed at Lennon himself. As a principled,

witty and charismatic agitator, Lennon provides the documentary with its central voice of dissent. But it is also revealed to be the voice of stony-eyed idealism with little substance behind it. Though we are told repeatedly that this is a man who sacrificed his own safety for the sake of peace, just how John and Yoko intended to establish it is never revealed. This comes to a head in a heated battle of wits between Lennon and a journalist at *The New York Times*, who accuses him of empty eloquence. He is, far once, outmaneuvered by her attacks and begins to flounder. But of

course, he still comes out on top because he's John Lennon and she's not.

US vs John Lennon sits well in the current climate of anti-Americanism, but there is a vast gulf between the dissonance of a Michael Moore and the simple make-believe-not-war-values of the hippy generation. The film is in fact at its most engaging when it shows us the private Lennon – not the activist or the musician, but the doting father or the worshipping husband. Idealist or not, this is a man who cared, and as a protagonist, Lennon is flexible and

impossibly cool and that's where the real appeal of *US vs John Lennon* lies. **Diana Peterson**

Anticipation: Watching one man take on the world. **Four**

Enjoyment: Sweet soundtrack, and it's fun to watch blues fall from grace. **Three**

In retrospect: As a document extraordinaire, *Lennon* as all talk and no action. **Two**





HOLLYWOODLAND

STORY BY
JENNIFER
WATSON

WRITTEN BY
Adam Carlin
& Andrew A. KOSOVE
ADAPTED BY
Adam Carlin
& Andrew A. KOSOVE

Placing itself in the

long line of Hollywood movies about Hollywood, *Hollywoodland* is based on the mysterious death of George Reeves, television's first Superman, who died in 1959 in his own home from a single gunshot wound to the head. A verdict of suicide was officially recorded, but as Coulter's film demonstrates, there were plenty of characters who wanted him dead.

Ben Affleck is a handsomely pretty Reeves, his physique plumped up by the chubby peddling of his Superman suit. Reeves felt limited by the role, which brought him national fame but restrictive typecasting and the extra weight helps Affleck to appear at once

vulnerable and comic, playing the Superman scenes in particular for knowing laughs.

Adrien Brody is Louie Lomax, the private detective who initially treats the investigation as just another payday, but gradually becomes personally involved when he discovers uneasy parallels between Reeves' life and his own. Brody is a man on the slide, but although his frustrated ambitions echo Reeves' own, an emotional link between them is never fully established, making it hard to believe that Brody has indeed switched from cynical PI to selfless crusader.

The distance between characters isn't helped by the fact that the film itself is so simple in its mechanics. A team of journalists

is never far from the action, but they're no more than puppets to be manipulated by anyone with an ear to grind. Whether it's Reeves the unknown ducking into photographs to increase his exposure or Brody feeding reporters pieces of information to keep the pretense on his serious adversity, it's a world view of basic cause and effect that serves for little more than propelling the plot forward, fairly unconvincingly.

It is widely held that Reeves was killed either by his jealous girlfriend or the husband of his mistress, or that he killed himself in a fit of depression. Each of these scenarios is dramatized in the film, but merely seeing the various alternatives doesn't make them any more real when

the characters involved seem so remote from one another. Indeed, *Hollywoodland* brings nothing new to the sad story of George Reeves, and the film eventually lurches to its conclusion like the man himself, stumbling drunk in his bloodied suit. **Steve Wozniak**

Anticipation: Ben Affleck's career lurches on. **Three**

Enjoyment: A solidly told tale caught teasingly between comic and knowing comedy. **Three**

In Retrospect: Well intentioned, but too single-minded to matter. **Two**

ONCE UPON A TIME
A BAKING POT
OF LOVE LENA
MEET LOVE
MAURICE

Coming
to
Theater

Venus, the goddess

of sexual healing, has sown the blood of men for centuries, men who live by their dashes, men who denounce restraint to embrace temptation. Men like Maurice (D'Toole)—a dodderly 70-something with one leg firmly in the grave, and the other strapped to a catheter.

Maurice and his wife sail British waters, bound by an age-old friendship and a thespian sense of their impending mortality. Having chased the big time and settled for bit parts, they provide a dose of wit and old-boy warmth in one another's

twilight. Jessie is her's grandniece—a pink-lips-and-blonk Pot. Noodle-slurping olive who left her small-town life in the North for the promise of bright lights. She's also just the Venus to reignite Maurice's libidinous impulses.

Ploughing headlong into a generational gap, Maurice becomes drawn to Jessie's "Am I boresed?" ethos. The relationship that forms is both curious yet ordinary—in her youthful leers, he finds escape; in him, she finds something she'd sooner deny.

Despite being eligible for a slot on Jerry Springer, what arises is strangely neither sick nor

sweet, as a quiet mutual affection makes for a convincing tale of generational-geek, mixed with the usual insecurities and broken pinks.

And yet, black around its comic edges, this is far from the saccharine affair one might expect. In a single voyeuristic swing, Venus will somehow restore your faith in the destiny of soul mates, while your inbuilt social morals cover at an old man's sexual reawakening.

All its core, Venus is a simple caring of age tale, both young and old, and a stark reminder that we may never truly understand

ourselves—no matter how long we stick it out. *Andrew Kuttel*

Anticipation. Ready for a good old dose of English conservatism? *Two*

Enjoyment. Did he just *could* her? *Excellent! Three*

In retrospect. It won't rank social-value systems, but genuine wit and a delicate sense of the human bond offers some much-needed light, albeit a smother. *Three*





OLD JOY



CASTING BY GUY MORGAN
STYLING BY LUSHUM
CLOTHES LONDON, JANE SMITH

How do you set

about finding something when you don't know what it is you're lost? This is the question facing Kurt (Wil Daft) and Mark (Daniel London) as they set off for a weekend camping trip in the Oregon mountains. Both men are quietly stunned to find themselves facing 40 Mark is shuffling toward fatherhood while Kurt insulates himself with drugs. So they head

for a hot spring in the woods in a bid to reconnect the husk of their relationship.

This semi-biographical information is largely inferred from the debris of non-sequiturs that pepper their journey: there is no cloying back-story, no big revelations. A sense that a friendship has been outgrown, and all that remains are vague, unformed recriminations, is

conveyed in naturalistic pauses, grunts and glances.

As intimate story set amongst the sullen grandeur of Oregon's woodland with a restrained soundtrack by Yo La Tengo, *Old Joy* occasionally recalls *Five Easy Pieces*. Like Jack Nicholson's Bobby Dupea, these men seek no epiphany, no validation, merely the subtlest connection and the strength to feel joy once again.

It's mournful stuff, dripping with pathos and simplicity lacking in humour, but Reichardt's film still somehow manages to be vibrant and warm. The characters are never reduced to the clichés they could so easily have become, and the film's long periods of silence come to impart as much meaning as the few words shared between them. The landscape is beautifully

GONE

DIRECTED BY
Benjamin
Lewy
STARRING Steven
Yang, Ben
Lewy, Ben
Lewy

Should you rely on

the kindness of strangers? As a backpacker, there's nothing like meeting a fellow traveler and hitting it off, particularly one who offers you a free ride. But rather than affirming the joys of such happy encounters, Ben director Benjamin Lewy's debut feature, *Gone*, warns against taking such risks.

This ominous story is played out in Australia where British couple Alex and Sophie (Steven Evans and Amelia Warner) meet the mysterious and enigmatic Taylor (Ben Lewy), who does creepy outdoor with dearming skills. After a brief friendship, Taylor unexpectedly

invites Alex and Sophie to join him on a road trip, and with some apprehension the couple accept.

The travelers decide to head off the beaten track to explore the hidden terrain of the Outback, but as the weather becomes both unbearable and volatile, so do the characters. Alex becomes increasingly aware of Taylor's interest in his girlfriend and is concerned that Taylor's calm demeanor belies a more sinister sensibility. His fears are realized when Taylor uses blackmail to drive a wedge between the young couple.

The whole what-are-you-going-will-go-wrong? adage is a tried and in demand, so *Gone's* psychological tilt is refreshing for those who can

small a plot twist, a role away. It's also an outstanding example of how to create tension: when to let it brew build up and break out. This is strong work with an interesting premise, and that should always be rewarded. **See them**

Anticipation: *Movie* *Outback* scenes are always worth watching. **Three**

Enjoyment: Like walking a tightrope that's about to break. **Three**

In retrospect: Good, but *the* *propaganda* and *the* *crew* are hard come to follow. **Two**



SMOKIN' ACES

DIRECTED BY
Joe Carnahan
STARRING Ben
Reynolds, Jeremy
Parr, Ben Affleck

GOING

Smokin' Aces goes

to show that, even for the good guys, things can still go bad if enough people want them to. Buddy Aces (Ben Reynolds) is the mob member moonlighting as an FBI informant. New Special Agent (Joseph Ruskin), his deathbed-ridden nemesis and that gang leader wants him dead. Protected by hero cops Ray Liddle and Ryan

Reynolds after a million-dollar price tag is placed on his head, a race to his Nevada hide-out ensues.

The film rattles along at an alarming pace in the lead up to an enlightening shoot-out, peeling up random characters and subplots along the way, one of which includes a karate-obsessed, eye patch-wearing ADHD kid with hormonal ruminations. As a

result, *Smokin' Aces* leaves you wondering just when the story is going to begin, but a script which is littered with 'I've gotta bust you' phrases leaves you in no doubt that this is a gangster film through-and-through.

However, once the anticipation of violence is settled, it becomes apparent that *Smokin' Aces* (Reynolds) is to be our one reference point

in the necessarily backslapping world, and his quest for clarity returns the film to an altogether safer place. His plan for everything to just 'make sense' is the film's turning point, just when everything seemed to be sliding dangerously out of control. And by the end, make sense it does, but by that time you can't help but feel that it's too late, too late. **See them**

Anticipation: Working with Ben Reynolds is a great experience. **Two**

Enjoyment: Like and you'll miss the plot. **Two**

In retrospect: You're never at home better, but you're definitely never at home worse. **Three**



STRANGER THAN FICTION

DIRECTED BY
Marc Forster
STARRING TWO
Harold Crick
Thompson, Meggie
Gyllenhaal

THE
CRAZY
CONCEPT

Imagine, if you will, the sweet blossom of Charlie Kaufman in full bloom. Imagine this mingling with the flowers of Spike Jonze in the garden of David O. Russell, leaped by the waters of Michel Gondry. Wouldn't that be paradies?

Now imagine, if you can bear it, that dream turned to nightmare. Imagine the creative ethos that incorporated chrome at the turn of the century blended, pulped and squeezed through a studio juicer. Imagine it repackaged, genre-fied, painted beige and made fit for general consumption.

Imagine *Stranger Than Fiction*, Marc Forster and Will Ferrell's life-slapping bear hug to Generation Y.

Harold Crick (Ferrell) is a bookman. He lives in insular minimalism, surrounded by two-key CDs, which helpfully illustrates his state of geriatric-supposed consumer angst. But Harold has a problem: He has a voice in his head—the voice of reclusive writer Kay Eiffel, naming Harold to his death. With the help of aging professor Jules Hilbert (Holtzman), Harold must find the source of this voice, before his demise concludes the final chapter of her book.

Stranger Than Fiction looks great. It's as clean and pretty and awfully envious as an IKEA catalogue. And perhaps separately, there were two fascinating stories: the writer struggling with greatness; and the question of literature's relationship to the real world. If the characters we create are alive, do what extent must we take responsibility for their, or our, actions?

But felicity. In one disastrous



scene, Forster collapses these two distinct strands into one narrative. And in the dust of that decision you realize that he just doesn't dig it—that detachment you need to make a film like this work.

Forster wants to be in the hipster gang, but at the same time he wants to make a sensible movie—a proper movie, with comfortable shoes. But even as he fails to embrace the ambivalence and complexity that could have saved this film, you realize that, actually, this isn't even a proper movie

anyway. There's nothing going on here—no death, no subtlety, no meta-textual analysis of, you know, meta-textual stuff. It's about a guy who can actually hear a voice in his head, for real, but not only is he not crazy, he gets Meggie Gyllenhaal into the sack. What gives?

There are flashes of talent along the way, not least the great use of The Jan's (Theda Bara) 'Entertainment', but *Stranger Than Fiction* is a shallow disappointment and a meaningless stab at being cool. **Not Worth It**

Anticipation: Was Ferrell gone straight, and Marc Forster celebrates himself as a man of the moment. **B+**

Enjoyment: Tastyful, well photographed, nearly cleverer. It's good, but it's not right. **B-**

In Retrospect: Muddled, mediocre, unconvincingly and unconvincingly inconsistent. **D+**



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PERFUME: THE STORY OF A MURDERER

CASTING BY
Tom Tykwer
STYLING BY
Ann Robinson,
Quinn Hoffman,
The Whitebox

PERFUME

It was the film they said couldn't be made. Patrick Suskind's bizarre story of a naturally gifted murderer passed through the hands of Ridley Scott, Tim Burton, Martin Scorsese and even Stanley Kubrick. Somehow it ended up with Tom Tykwer, director of *Run Lola Run*. The result is a stunning success never have reviewers flooded from

the screen with such poisonous pencils as Tykwer delivers in this eye-wonder, thrilling and horrifying story.

Born in ungrateful circumstances under a table in a fish market, Jean-Baptiste Grenouille (Ben Whishaw) is an outcast from the moment he slithers to the floor. He does, however, possess an unusual

scent: his sparkling nostrils are able to absorb the sweet smells of youth, virility, beauty and innocence. But he has no smell of his own, and seems destined to live a life of scentless solitude until one fateful night, he has a run-in with a stunning red-head who possesses an aroma so enchanting that he inhales the life out of her. Struck

with an insatiable desire for more, and intrigued by the feralist Baldini (Dustin Hoffman), Grenouille embarks on a murderous, scent-inspired spree.

A comforting voice-over allied to the film's vast power and evocative nature makes this fabulous fairy tale somehow definite and tangible. Indeed,

every ingredient in the film – from the costuming and lighting to the acting and directing – has been distilled to a rare purity. And that makes *Perfume* a truly incredible experience down to the very last drop. **Masterpiece**

Anticipation: This soulless appetitive brought to the screen. **Three**

Enjoyment: For a film about smells, *Perfume* is about as far from a stinkier as you can possibly imagine. **Four**

In Retrospect: Like the best perfume, it's subtle, rich and intoxicating. **Five**

An interview with Tom Tykwer, director of *Perfume*.

LWL: *Perfume* was always going to generate huge expectations. Was it hard to approach the film using just your own feelings about the book?

Tykwer: That was a difficulty. It's a book that people are mesmerized by, which is different to a regular book series. As they look at bookshelves, because you can usually compare them, like *Blackboard* series. That book was different, people said it was part of their biography, it's very close to them. And if you consider what *Perfume* is about, that's very interesting and very disturbing too. You don't want to disappoint these people; but at the same time everybody expects an individual perspective and vision, so that was challenging.

LWL: Did you feel this was Grenouille's story or were you concerned with addressing more universal themes?

Tykwer: I think the only way to get to the universal themes of the book was to be infinitely close to the guy – his perspective, his emotion – even if it is an upside disturbing and pretty distorted. That's something mysterious about the novel too; you just stay with him until the very bitter end, you can't let go and there's a seductive part about him that goes into the darker sides of us. He's maybe the darkest hero in cinematic history.

LWL: He is dark but he's also a victim of society, they're all responsible for him. Do you think that's a theme relevant to a modern audience?

Tykwer: He's like a classical literary or cinematic character of "the average", the nobody who longs to be a somebody. The universality of his problem comes from the fact that everything he is struggling with we know about; we understand complex life experience. He's close to the ideas of moral existence, which is also something that I like. Finally a period movie that's not set in the neoclassical world. We, and the book of course, are depicting reality as a way that is dramatic.

LWL: *Perfume* was a huge film in terms of costs and production. Was there as much scope for creative freedom?

Tykwer: It's blown up the creative team, there are more creative decisions to make, giving you more room to be inspired. Making your own complex or challenging. And you're not alone, I'm working with some Jeff, Brockman Simpson and all the people around them, so I feel much as that family because we all grew up together into deeper-made productions – it's not like everybody feels completely isolated, everybody's just as nervous as we and that makes things much more enjoyable, and also more exciting. **Also Get**

BIG NOTHING

PG-13
Parents Strongly Cautioned

DIRECTED BY
Jean YVES ESCOFFIER
ALSO
STARRING David
Socorro, Peter
Peggy, and
John Lee

Charlie (David)

(Socorro) is a would-be writer in a broken town that suffers with small-time success stories and big-time failures. After taking a dead-end job as an IT phone monkey, Charlie meets Gus (Simon Pegg), a low-rent crook with a high-end plan: a no-lose blackmail scheme that promises each of them a six-figure payday. What happens instead involves multiple homicide, a blond bombshell, a family crisis, dirty cops, a serial killer, a bag full of cash, and some cuddly toys. *Big Nothing* is, if nothing else, a head-spinning ride.

You can see what director



Jean-Yves Escoffier had in mind here: a throwback to the late '60s Tennessee trail of lanky, high-style dramas. Inspired by the likes of Danny Boyle, John Herzfeld and Gary Fleder. For its part, *Big Nothing* is an energetic and inventive piece of filmmaking, but like Gus' plan, it's far from flawless.

Shot on the Isle of Man, it suffers badly from a sense of geographical ordinariness. In

conjuring a vision of Anyplace USA, Escoffier has made a restless, isolated film, which makes a mockery of Pegg's exclaiming American accent. But actress Alice Eve does better: but you can't help wondering what the likes of M.F.'s Michelle Monaghan might have done with the role.

Still, once you get your head around the fact that *Big Nothing* is in essence a comic-fantasy-

assisted-head-batterer-with-a-twist, it's decent enough while it lasts. **Met** **Neutral**

Anticipation: Where's Rick Frost? **Two**

Enjoyment: Still can't see him. **Three**

In Retrospect: Where's Rick Frost out, against **Two**

FLUSHED AWAY

PG-13
Parents Strongly Cautioned

A largely uninspiring

trailer made *Flushed Away* look like the very poor relative of next summer's Pixar hot ticket *Ratatouille*. That Aardman had slipped away from claymation and into CG seemed like a move that could only backfire. The first 10 minutes of *Flushed Away* do nothing to suggest otherwise, but gradually the Aardman pedigree begins to assert itself.

As an awe screenplay penned by Brilligton veterans Dick Clement and Ian La Frenais, it avoids the usual DreamWorks problem of sacrificing humor for an endless slew of pop culture gags, while the Aardman tradition of Hugh Jackman and



Kate Winslet adds the expected air of Hollywood glamour (even if it's Sir Ian McKellen's performance as the nefarious Toad that steals the show).

The soundtrack is also surprisingly solid, with Billy Joel's hymn to misadventure "Dancing With Myself" kicking things off in admirable style. On the visual front, it's nice to see that the rendering process has been

taken to such lengths that even the fingerprints and smudges that would appear on plasticine models have been included on the character models.

There may be no great surprises here, but the sharp script and visual gags mean *Flushed Away* keeps its head above the film. **Amby** **Delicious**

Anticipation: The

trailer suggested something best left looking in the bowl. **One**

Enjoyment: A successful duck story looks CG for the claymation kings. **Three**

In Retrospect: Will work on DVD for kids and still be a quality pleasure for adults. **Four**

ESMA'S SECRET

DIRECTED BY
Jasmina ZBENEC
STARRING: JASMINA
ZBENEC, LUNA
MIJOVIĆ, LENA
LUPIN

ESMA'S SECRET
RATED PG-13

In the most striking

scene in Jasmina Zbenec's emotive and well-judged study of the human aftermath of war, a long pen uncovers a room full of women revealing each one in turn, all listening intently as one of their number sings a traditional folk song. Each of their faces speaks of traumas survived and loved ones lost, but they never say a word.

It's 10 years since the massacre in Srebrenica – the darkest episode in the Balkan conflict – and, understandably, the region is still raw. But life goes on, and normally re-assembles itself. Esma is a single mother with a wilful young daughter, Sena, with whom she has a turbulent but ultimately tender relationship. However, it only takes something as innocuous as an impending school trip to

unearth hidden pain and the bitter reality of recent years. When it turns out that the children of men who were killed during the war will be exempt from the costs of the trip, Esma appears reluctant to give her daughter the necessary certificate, and instead takes a part-time job in a seedy bar to help her raise the money.

Bosnian director Zbenec presents a plausible picture of life in her country now that the fighting has ceased and the news crews have moved on. She also draws a phenomenal performance from the young Luna Mijović in her debut role as Sena. Alternating between aggression and bratty indifference to her mother's troubles, this scowling, angry child commands the camera throughout, and more than holds her own

alongside the restrained and dignified Miroslav Kaniževic.

Esma's Secret manages to be well observed and socially relevant without running its worthiness down your throat – something that saves it a notch above most 'issue' cinema. Zbenec's seemingly everyday scenes echo with resonance as the truth of what happened to Esma during the war, and why she grows so tight-lipped every time Sena asks questions about her father, slowly emerges.

Esma's tentative relationship with a local heavy is touchingly handled, and though the addition of a patol in the inevitable mother-daughter collision towards the end of the film threatens to tip things over into melodrama, the combined skill of Kaniževic and Mijović ensure that while

the scene is distressing, it is not unbearably so.

This is an undeniably bleak film, but it is a shot with real warmth and, on occasion, a welcome lightness of touch. More importantly, it has opened the door to the pain that still affects the people of the former Yugoslavia today. **Matilda Trapp**

Anticipation: ★ Kila about the emotional aftermath of the Bosnian war? Sounds still. Intentioned but dull. Two

Enjoyment: ★ harrowing yet subtle portrait of a country still healing. Three

In Retrospect: Well acted, intelligent and genuinely powerful. Four



WAITING
IN AREA
LUMP

CLEAN UP
AFTER
YOURSELF



ROBBY

DIRECTED BY Emilio Estevez
STARRING Anthony Hopkins,
Steven Seagal, Lindsay Lohan

THE KENNEDY
CURSE

It's apt that disgruntled

Americans should have fired George W. In the recent mid-terms, just as this long-awaited biopic of their favorite liberal poster boy was preparing to hit cinemas across the country Bobby Kennedy would have been proud of the election result. That is, had he not been murdered in cold blood in the kitchen of the Ambassador Hotel during the presidential primaries of 1968.

This bloody misadventure of the Kennedy curse is the event which brings together an eclectic bunch of 22 men, women and politicians who all find themselves in the Ambassador on the fateful night of June 5. Anthony Hopkins' retiring doorman looks back on decades of service whilst playing the longest and least eventful game of chess Henry Belafonte has ever

been involved in. William H Macy's otherwise principled hotelier turns a blind eye to his own adultery as he upholds his staff for racial discrimination, Lindsay Lohan plays the blushing bride to a man she barely knows, just to keep him away from the front line in Vietnam. But as sub-plot after sub-plot stacks up, the awful realization emerges: there is no men plot here at all.

As the film progresses, Sharon Stone, Helen Hunt, Joe Pasqua Jackson and Elijah Wood compete for ever-decreasing slices of screen time, overloading and ultimately unbalancing the film's fragile tapestry. By the time Bobby eventually mounts the stage for the final act it is too late to save this hugely ambitious project from dimming redundancy. In the end, there simply isn't

enough script to go around a production which appears to have been cast solely from names on the director's Christmas card list.

For his part, Emilio Estevez seems content to fall back on the circumstantial unity of place holding the disparate elements of his story together, but by doing so he tacitly admits that they have precious little else in common. Worse: Laurence Fishburne's painful once and future king's speech removes the film to a realm of ideological fantasy which betrays the political simplicity at its heart. Since LeBeau does his best to salvage the show with a rousing eloquent turn as an LSD-addicted campaign volunteer who trips in a cell filter tray. Sadly, his virtuoso display of deflection just serves to

hammer home the feeling that Bobby, well, kinda stunk. **Mike Kent**

Anticipation: ■ *shockophrenic* can't get into their collective teeth like the greatest untold story of recent political times. Being so though, is that 'Robbery' smothered on the back of the director's chair? **Joe**

Enjoyment: You're a plot supposed to move things along when your actors get stuck in a quagmire of half-baked storylines? **Joe**

In Retrospect: You know how this movie just gets better with age? Never forget that cheap plunk doesn't t. **Joe**

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BLACK BOOK

DIRECTED BY Paul Verhoeven
STARRING Carice van Houten,
Johannes Nijenhuis, Frans Vermoren

Black Book
Reviewed by

Bleak truths are a currency Paul Verhoeven enjoys dealing in. From the lighting and faking that coloured early work like *Spetters*, right down to the square-jawed Übermensch of *Shirley Troopers*, he is dogged in his mission to provoke, tease and offend by making the viewer seriously question who they're rooting for.

Now he's back on Dutch turf for the first time in 20 years, and the result, *Black Book*, is a delightful mélange of the quasi-exploitative Verhoeven who produced such rough gems as *The Fourth Man* and *Soldier of Orange* (which this film most clearly resembles) and the shrewd, calculated master of thrills who brought us *RoboCop* and *Tatooine Rival*. This is a highbrow blockbuster, but, as always with

Verhoeven's work, there's a cruel twist to be had.

Star in-the-making Carice van Houten plays Rachel Stein, a Dutch Jew in Nazi-occupied Holland who, upon witnessing the murder of her entire family in an elaborate sting concocted by the uproariously wicked Nazi officer Franken (Waldemar Kobak), decides the best thing she can do is join the resistance movement.

There, whilst moonlighting as a cabaret singer, she falls in love with a sympathetic member of the Nazi top brass, an upside moral that thrusts her into a gulf of moral uncertainty, where a rigorous questioning of personal affinity becomes a matter of life and death.

Van Houten's performance is almost worryingly committed, as she turns on a dime from serene

and sexy while fending off the numerous sexual advances of her male cohorts, to throws of genuine anguish when she is strangled and covered in human shit as punishment for her suspected involvement in Nazi dealings.

More a thriller than a war movie, the action is still coloured by a sense of vivid historical recollection (that of the director's own youth) and rip-roaring narrative-driven adventure. It turns violent, sexually frank and deeply engaging; the plot barely stops even until the ham-fisted Planet of the Apes-esque finale, which forces us to realise that our plucky heroine is far from safe, while also adhering to Verhoeven's almost dutiful sense of moral needling.

But unlike a film like *Shirley*

Troopers was its elegant subtlety on its sleeve, *Black Book* seems the more studied, meticulously better film as we leave the crime in a state of classified subfection, hating ourselves for enjoying it. For two hours we're at the director's total mercy, and boy does it feel good. **Dave Karger**

Anticipation: The follow-up to *Follow Me* to be. **Three**

Enjoyment: The master is back at the top of his game. Verhoeven has been able to date. **Five**

In Retrospect: Would you want to see it again? **Yes.** And not damn you, Verhoeven. **Four**

DEEP WATER

DIRECTED BY
KYLE CROWHURD
CASTING BY
JAMES GUNN
EDITED BY
GARY HUNTER
PRODUCED BY
KYLE CROWHURD

THE
CROWHURD
FILMS

Deep Water is the story of Donald Crowhurst, and the darkness that consumes him as he mentally sails over the precipice in the 1968 round-the-world yacht race. It is a sympathetic portrait of a man drowning in the fabrications he creates to protect his family. Signing a pact with the devil to get the means to make his own boat, the inexperienced Crowhurst must finish the race or face ruin, debt and financial ruin. But haunted by his debts on land, he finds no solace at sea. As the relentless

ocean begins to erode his boat, he catches a twisted plea to cheat in the race. The psychological strain of his situation soon takes him to breaking point.

With its fable-like quietude and otherworldliness, *Deep Water* mirrors the sailors' own experiences, floating alone in the middle of the ocean. That lonely landscape is captured with rich, 16mm film, as well as the journals and audio diaries from the voyage itself. Meticulously, the material gleaned from archive footage and

talking head interviews means there is no need for any heavy dramatizations: the story and the film's contributors – family, witnesses, reporters of the time and old sea dogs – make *Deep Water* enthralling enough.

It is such an emotional and troubling story that there is an argument for leaving this disturbing tale of one man's madness alone. But *Deep Water* has an enduring effect, and deserves to be seen as a captivating analysis of how persistent stress can affect

someone mentally and physically over time. Worse things do indeed happen at sea. **A- (see below)**

Anticipation: Sailing don't read as a life jacket. **C+**

Enjoyment: An adventure that descends into the heart of darkness. **B+**

In Retrospect: A poignant journey presented with compassion. **B+**





THE LAST KING OF SCOTLAND

by David
Koppe

DIRECTED BY
Gavin Macdonald
STARRING FROM
WILSON JONES
McKENZIE GILLEN
McKENZIE GILLEN

Ugandan dictator Idi Amin. Lord of All the Beasts of the Earth and Fishes of the Sea! and the focus of Kevin Macdonald's *The Last King of Scotland*, was everything but modest, but here a charismatic figure—and this is a scorching take on his life.

Not during Amin's murderous reign in the '70s: the film follows naive young Scot Nicholas Garrigan (James McAvoy) who arrives in Uganda with a taste for adventure and a desire to put his newly-acquired medical skills into practice. A chance encounter with Amin (a career-best Forest Whitaker) catapults him from village doctor to the President's personal physician, placing him squarely in the lap of luxury and,

eventually, the line of fire.

Initially, Garrigan is oblivious to the antics of the man who reportedly murdered over 300,000 of his countrymen, instead seduced by his impressive stature and the apparently sincere conviction that Amin is the man to lead Uganda out of its post-colonial haze. But as Amin's closest confidant, he becomes all too aware of the unseen power that the leader wields.

Garrigan is a refreshingly flawed character: a clear anti-hero whose artless and ultimately deadly actions blur the boundaries between right and wrong, and highlight the racist nature of the Westerner in Uganda. After the workaday whiteness of *Nurse* and

the ugly sentiment of *Sliver* for 13, this is a testing role for the breezy charms of James McAvoy, and in truth his young shoulders don't quite flex out the character enough to convince.

Much of the film's visceral power can be attributed to the outstanding performance of Whitaker. Amin is a complicated historical figure, supported by the international community on his accession to power (the Brits are alleged to have called him, "A splendid type and a good football player"), until his brutal and emotional nature became clear. Whitaker makes a compelling, corrupt leader, whose foppish moods shift like a child's, switching from euphoric to violent in a heartbeat.

Director Macdonald's first (semi-) fiction outing is neatly executed. He spins a gripping enough yarn with some genuinely affecting set pieces—one periculously nasty torture scene stands out—that conveys the violence and complicity of Amin's regime. **B+** *Jason Cole*

Anticipation. The new downtown *Gotham*? Is that good or bad? **B+**

Enjoyment. Forest Whitaker was the screen as the charismatic Idi Amin. **B+**

In Retrospect. Snapping in places, it serves as an eye opener to a dangerous time. **B+**

An interview with Kevin Macdonald, director of *The Last King of Scotland*

LWL: Before *The Last King of Scotland* you were thinking of doing another film set in Angola. What is it about Africa that attracts you?

Macdonald: There is something in the outcast that some people are more interested in Africa. Globalisation has had a strange effect on us, so that in Africa there is a free flow of capital around the world and yet somehow there isn't a free flow of morality. That economicism has become too glaring to ignore. Places like Uganda are just an eight-hour flight away, and we should be aware that people are dying needlessly from poverty, disease, civil strife. It's just much harder to pretend it's not our business.

LWL: Were you wary of not allowing Africa to play into a Hollywood stereotype?

Macdonald: In lots of ways I wanted to get away from the stereotype. The most important decision was that we filmed in Uganda. I wanted to show a side of African people haven't seen before, thus quite sexy, cool, sophisticated city. It's shocking to show people a world they aren't familiar with, and get away from the normal cinematic cliché of savannah, roaming wildebeest and giraffe, or a place as remote.

LWL: Did you feel that you had to be there to experience the socio-political climate?

Macdonald: Absolutely. There were people all around us who had friends and family that died under Amin. By Ugandan cultural norms helped us to get the dialogue to feel authentic. I think the influence of being there affected everyone. Foreigners came with their's machines and family, ate the food he ate, and even had to stand in front of four thousand Ugandans who've worn the real Amin speak. That put fear into his performance.

LWL: How did Ugandans respond to the film?

Macdonald: Surprisingly enough they were utterly open to it. Their only concern was how we were going to portray him, whether we would show him as a conditioned outcast villain. In certain ways they felt he should be portrayed as a human being, not a conditioned outcast villain. Most people have an ambivalent attitude - he made them feel proud to be African.

LWL: The filming of both *Touching the Void* and *The Last King of Scotland* must have involved huge obstacles!

Macdonald: Yes, but I think I rather like that. I find it stimulating to be somewhere there's hard. It makes you less indulgent because you're not thinking of irrelevant things you're thinking, "bloody hell, how am I going to do this?" Your focus is entirely on the film.

LWL: So when you choose a project, is it all about the challenge?

Macdonald: It's about showing people a world they will be surprised by. *Touching the Void* in the mountains as a cryozone on something most people haven't seen before that keeps me interested as I get usually bored and need to prick myself with a challenge. *Amos Katana*

Check out the full transcript at www.thewebinterviews.co.uk



DEAD MAN'S CARDS

DEAD
MAN'S
CARDS

WRITTEN BY James Macdonald
DIRECTED BY James Macdonald
CASTING BY Anna Markiewicz

Directorial debuts are

tricky affairs, especially when it's your script. You are inside the film, part of its fabric; its twists and turns represent the inner deliberations of your mind, the outcome is your soul laid bare. Get it right and it's your career starter-for-10. Get it wrong, and your filmmaker's card is marked for life.

Cards is a strange debut: a modern western set in Liverpool detailing the soul-searching tribulations of Tom (co-writer James McMillin), an ex-convict who's fallen on hard times. Sporting partner Paul (Denzel Barber) introduces him to the Liverpoolian bouncer scene, while a rival protection racket led by Ghorgi (the current three-time heavyweight world kick-boxing champion Mark Russell) try to test Tom's allegiance to Paul with the prospect of fabulous fortunes.

Macdonald's vision is a stylised and remarkably complete debut, a gem given with tangible passion from the hard-independent film soul-felt which benefits greatly from an enigmatic performance by the late Tom Sell as Billy the Cowboy. The jockey story is peppered with bang-scored drive-ins, stand-offs and fistfights, as

opposed to the modern fascination for the quick, clinical executions of plots. Macdonald and McMillin's script - honest, determined and informed - never betrays the inexperience of its creators, but its biggest failing is the magnificence afforded to the back-story - where Tom's impotence with his wife Kris (Samantha Janus), mirrors the falling end to his boxing career.

That said, this film is a solid hand dealt from a tricky deck. A gangster grit-flick of new motion, *Dead Man's Cards* delivers the brutality of club violence, set against the backdrop of emotional turmoil and the search for a feeling of worth in the face of adversity and loss. Macdonald's card is definitely marked, but luckily for him he's holding an ace. *Adam Blythe*

Anticipation: Low-key, low budget, low quality? Yes

Enjoyment: Pleasant. Entertaining and focused. Yes

In Retrospect: Not an indie champion, but a heavyweight entry worth a look. Yes



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THE BACK
SECTION

READING PAGE

IN WHICH WE
DISCUSS THE
MOVIE OF
FILM IN
ITS MANY
MESMERISING
FORMS.

51A

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THE DIRECTORS SPECIAL

Stoverman/Kass/Voss

**IN THIS ISSUE,
10 OF THE
WORLD'S MOST
IMPORTANT,
INFLUENTIAL
AND JUST
PLAIN
INSPIRING
DIRECTORS
DISCUSS THE
TOPICS CLOSE
TO THEIR
HEART.**

Schwarzman/Mass/Voss

**EDITED BY
CHIEF CUSTOMS
OFFICER DAVID
JENKINS AND
DESIGNED BY
THE WORLD'S
FIRST MALE
STEWARDESS,
ROB LONGWORTH.**

THE MAVERICK.

О себе сообщают следующие сведения:

1.	Фамилия / Surname	
2.	Имя / Given name	
3.	Гражданство / Nationality	

Paul Verhoeven, director of *Black Book*, opens up to EW on Europe, censorship and his own experience of being bombed.

One of the most touching photographs depicts a group of children in the town of Srebrenica, a former Serbian town in what is now Bosnia. The children are standing in a line, holding hands, and looking towards the camera. The caption reads: "A group of children in the town of Srebrenica, a former Serbian town in what is now Bosnia." The photograph is a black and white image, showing a group of about a dozen children of various ages. They are standing in a line, holding hands, and looking towards the camera. The background is a simple, light-colored wall. The caption is printed in a small, sans-serif font below the photograph.

In comes a little surprise, then, that Tolstoyan arrives at our university clutching a well-thumbed copy of an annotated re-reading Richard Dawkins' new bestseller, *The God Delusion*. "I'm reading it," he says, "because it might be another nice science words or story." For a festival like this, with children, a little non-science is clearly in a dangerous place with children. "I'm reading it," he says, "because it might be another nice science words or story." For a festival like this, with children, a little non-science is clearly in a dangerous place with children. "I'm reading it," he says, "because it might be another nice science words or story." For a festival like this, with children, a little non-science is clearly in a dangerous place with children.

[illegible][illegible]

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DIRECTOR'S SPECIAL
PAUL VERHOEVEN
«У Д-а» и «Д-а»

Заявление

Прошу зарегистрировать мое пребывание в Российской Федерации
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SUNSHINE GANG

AN APPLICATION
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- the creator



1. SURNAME (as written in your passport)

DAYTON

2. FULL NAME (as written in your passport)

& FARIS

Jonathan Dayton and Valerie Faris, directors of *Little Miss Sunshine*, on ego in filmmaking.

FARIS: Filmmaking is not about putting yourself in the front. It's about asking, "What's the best solution to this creative problem?" I might come at something from one angle, but my co-director will come at it from another, but it's not about my idea versus his idea. If ego becomes an issue, then you should really be working on your own.

DAYTON: It's not about, "What do I have to say about something?" It's about, "What does this company?" Of course, the answer you give are reflections, as you're reflecting them through the prism of your self-image.

FARIS: It kind of helps in a way, because so many people who haven't worked with two directors before don't really know what to expect. What do they go and talk out? Who do we work with? When they talk to either of us and they'd work with the same woman, they know they can really talk to either of us and they'd want to hear from both of us. We had such a good supervisor with the editor on this film and we felt like, already, that's a collaborative happening, so they just got to be part of this collaboration. "What is the best answer for the problem?" is the question we constantly ask. It could be your answer, or it could be an editor's answer, it could be the 18 setting, using a hand with a camera. It doesn't matter to us where the best solution comes from, it's where our focus is that matters.

DAYTON: It's our job to recognize when the right answer comes in hand. That's the key: when we both think something is right, there's a strength there that is very different from working alone, at least for us.

FARIS: It's less frantic.

DAYTON: On the flip side, if you peer behind the scenes, you'll find that most directors have a confidence—a self-assurance, or the confidence, or the script supervisor, or their producer.

FARIS: Or their agent at home. However, I do think there are people who don't seek a collaborator. I would think that, yes. Other people probably don't need one. He's a big personality and it's a different style of filmmaking. I don't think it's better than the other, but I can think what we do is a less ego-driven form of filmmaking. There's nothing wrong with putting yourself in your film.

DAYTON: I think we're in the film, but it's not our ego that's in the film. It's our values as people. I don't watch the film and think, "Wow, that but was my idea." That would be terrible.

FARIS: People constantly ask what each of us do on our films and in our roles, and I think that's really complex to break down. It's the way that we've worked together for a long time that really shows up in our eyes of ego in their filmmaking. We read the book and here are the same in that way. "We both do everything." And look at them.

Little Miss Sunshine is released on DVD on January 23.

THE INDIE KID

DIRECTORS SPECIAL
FULTON & PEPE
BY DAVID JENKINS



استضافة بولكات خاصة به

FULTON : الاسم باللغة العربية :

& PEPE : الاسم باللغة الإنجليزية :

تلقوا : جهة التمويل :

أسباب ولقوب صرف هذه الوثيقة

Keith Fulton and Louis Pepe,
directors of *Brothers of the Road*,
on documentary filmmaking.

FULTON : It has always been our intention to straddle the territory that exists between documentary and fiction. Documentaries always seem to be glorified "Oh, they're the truth so there's less artistry involved in creating them than there is with fiction." Yet both forms rely on good storytelling. We've always looked at filmmakers like Wim Wenders and Werner Herzog, who have achieved a mixture of both throughout their careers and it's a path we also want to travel. You get so play around with elements that you end up in fiction filmmaking.

PEPE : We were also talking about documentaries by the Maysles brothers, Penn Zemanek, Josh Kwanok and Robert Frank and trying to come out the essence of what they captured and how they did it.

FULTON : With the actors, we used a total immersion technique so they could have the chance to improvise. By putting the actors through situations of easily creating the characters, they know those words out, so when we would go and shoot a scene it wasn't like, "Well, actually, we'd actually get them to start acting that just runs on the camera and shoot in a documentary style."

PEPE : As much of what happens when people talk about rock 'n' roll or that people often craft the history as if they were part of it. Ten talk about the first live Koolhaas in Manchester and there were only 40 people there, yet you hear more than 40 people who claim that they were one of those 40 people. Can we really know an event or a person even if we're not connected with them? We talked a lot about *Citizen Kane*, which builds up to the moment, "Oh, you can never understand a man's life by just one word" and then, of course, they had done his entire life with just one word. Part of the pleasure of documentary, as well as the shortcomings of all these types of storytelling is, if you feel you've successfully summed up someone's life you've probably got a very acute impression of what you're actually exposed.

Brothers of the Road released on DVD on January 11

الوثائق

لعمري أقيم

THE LEGEND

DIRECTOR'S SPECIAL
NIC BOGG
BY DAN STREIB

APPLICATION

1. PERSONAL DATA

1. LAST NAME/ FAMILY NAME

ROEG

2. NAME (FN)

NIC

3. FILM (B)

Nic Roeg, director of *Don't Look Now*, on the passage of time.

ROEG: "What makes God laugh? People who make plans. *Don't Look Now* is not a horror film, it's a love film. It's about the horror of life. Who knows when you go through a door what's going to happen next."

I don't think of time as something you can chop up. Moments go backwards and forwards like a clock, tick tock, tick tock. But all women is but a shadowy play about the repetition of things. Our entire life we repeat ourselves, we get up, we go to work. Then something happens in your life to change it completely. You don't know that it's going to happen. There are things that we don't like living. I think that *Don't Look Now* has something of that about it.

They make love before going to dinner instead of after dinner - it's unusual. She has a bath, she wakes her hair, he's washing the bath. They're not thinking about sex. She's lying on the bed reading a magazine, then she says, "Look at that," and she touches him and he touches her and they roll over and make love. And then they get dressed and she goes back up and they go out to dinner. Time is a prediction, tick tock, tick tock.

It was very strange watching the film again for the anniversary. Memories and emotions are very curious and sometimes they're all-embracing. I tried to remember what I felt like at the time. What that moment was in the right word or not, I don't know. One thinks of a moment in an explanation, but it was as much as rather than explanation. It reminded me of things that weren't necessarily in the scene. It was like looking at a younger version of myself.

I think it was Verónica who said, "I wrote books, and then I let them happen to me." I think that has been around for a while, it has no pattern to it. With this film it's an active process even now. If you're here, watching it, enjoying work it, thinking about it. The old feeling things out there it once now."

Don't Look Now Special Edition on DVD

15. PLACE OF BIRTH

16. DATE OF BIRTH

Month	Day	Year
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AGE _____ years

18. MARITAL STATUS

SINGLE ()

MARRIED ()

WIDOWED ()

DIVORCED ()

DIRECTOR'S SPECIAL
JOHN CAMERON MITCHELL
 BY DAVID J. JARVIS

THE PROVOCATEUR

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Full Name
JOHN
Surname
CAMERON
Patronymic
MITCHELL

John Cameron Mitchell, director of *Shiraz*,
 on sex in the movies.

MITCHELL: When I made *Shiraz* and the *Days* I was working on a play, and I was also watching some of the films that were coming out of Europe that contained frank sexuality. I just thought films like *Barrabas* and *Romeo* were doing a favoring language. There was a rush of them at one point, there have been about two dozen films since that last two years that have used real sex, and some of them are very frank, but they all do exactly what they want and not powerful in that respect. *El Mito* was a fantastic film, but just not my world view. I found it interesting in sex sex without a story that was more my cup of tea.

When making *Shiraz*, there was a certain reason in doing a sexual scene and doing to emotional scene. We'd been working for a very long time, and we're now all very good friends. If you know how Mike Leigh works, he has a very rigorous system that was different from ours in that he was very intense screen and he goes him to notice characters based on what they know. He'd then come up with their histories then put them in situations with other women or characters that repeat their scenes over and over.

In our case, I didn't want the characters to be sexual creatures. I wanted them to simplify the parts of their lives that were the richest, and we did all kinds of stuff. We played games, we did sports, we watched movies, we did straight camp. At the time of the *Indochina* for instance, I had been doing a monthly dance party called *Shiraz*, and we had one of those that night so they could come along and meet kind of other friends of mine. So it was a fun atmosphere and that night there was a big game of *Spanglish*.

The next day we showed everyone the audience tapes so we needed to know who was possibly sexually compatible. We also had a secret hall where people would come and talk to her so we could get the highly sexually compatible couples together. We were all going to her people's world, and as expected, the unexpected happened. Some characters had sex, some didn't.

Having sex in a scene is a bit like being able to speak Spanish. Some men you will and sometimes you won't, and sometimes you only know a few words. Sex is like another language to use in film. Oddly, in retrospect, if we didn't use sex in the film, it would have been less likely to have been noticed. It was like our David Byrne — a marketing tool.

Shiraz is covered on page 76

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ARCH ASSICIST

Full name: **PATRICE CHÉREAU**
 Age: **42**
 Place of birth: **PARIS**
 Profession: **Director**

*Patrice Chéreau, director of **Gabriel**, on French films, filmmaking and criticism.*

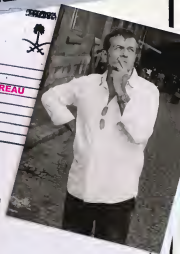
Qntin: I do not come from the world of film. I used to make theatre, and then opera, so I have a different background than the others, and I have very few friends in French cinema. I don't want to be a part of it.

A I watch very few French films. If I have the choice between an English film, a Spanish film and a French film, I'll choose the Spanish or the English one. I think probably because I feel myself to be very French, and it's not that I'm not interested, but I've got more work to do in film, the work that we share. There is a big tradition in French film of abstraction, of not being in reality. And because I share that I try to find my own relation to other cultures.

Q There is another thing. I am not touched at all by the films of the Nouvelle Vague, which is a shame at France. That's something I cannot say as an interview. I am not interested. I was 16 years old in the '60s, but my favourite cinema was American, or the German cinema from before the war, or Orson Welles.

A My taste was pointing me to another direction, but as you are you are to be the son of François Truffaut. If you are you, you are. Nobody understands. You know, they say, "You want to make films and you don't like François Truffaut!"

Q I don't say that they are not good, I just say that it is not my world. But the director of the *Blonde Bitch* were great before. Truffaut and Godard - and they were very good critics. I am very happy to read what they wrote about *Blackrock* - I am extremely interested in *Blackrock* of course, even if cinema were closed to me like that.



Q *Cobain de Celine*, who these directors wrote for, now has a lot of reviews. Terrible. They are much in his time, they say you are not making cinema, which is exactly my case. There are two magazines in France, *Cobain de Celine* and *Point de Vue* is a good one - they like me - and *Cobain de Celine* thinks me all the same. For them, I am someone who was never able to make a real film. So, I don't like them, and they don't like me. Probably because of the Nouvelle Vague. It's a dogma - I think it's the most serious dogma in France.

Q Did you ever think of making a film for the full magazine and a review of *Gabriel*?

THE NEW MAS

DIRECTOR'S SPECIAL
NURI BILGE CEYLAN
BY JONAS MEIS

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NURI

BILGE

CEYLAN

Nuri Bilge Ceylan, director of *Climates*, on relationships.

CEYLAN: It's the nature of two human beings. I think, we don't make the experience of a thing before we lose it. When we lose it, we are forced to think about it, and we realize the importance of things better. I think men, at a certain age especially, wonder it about themselves. He wants to know himself better, he's not content to be thrown himself on others' circumstances and people, and tries to understand from the inside who he is. Sometimes he has many questions about himself, and if he is with a girl he begins to see the girl as a vehicle to understanding himself better. He uses a life full of personal, full of problems, and things like that, he wants to get rid of the girl, but when a person finds work really after that experience he understands that the world doesn't offer that many possibilities as personal. Then he begins to see someone in the form of his girlfriend, but in the film

When the couple in the film are separated and he [the film's main character, played by the director himself] sees that the girl can live without him — she is on her own feet, strong — he begins to respect her. Some men while the girl comes to see him, he feels that she is dependent on him and weak again. At that moment he doesn't want her any more, he feels it will not work and everything is going to be the same in the old days again. Of course, women are not weak and everything is going to be the same in the old days again. I think, like that, women are a bit different in that sense, they have a more balanced soul, I think. They can live with less affection, but things like give more of a sense of mission to men, mostly respect and more success from them. So they have a heavier weight on their shoulders.

I think the sex scene [between the two men] was necessary in this sense. It shows the characteristics of the man better. Actually, the man doesn't feel like any sex in that moment, he needs some violence to get rid of the violence inside him. He feels desperate and hopeless, there is something he is doing inside in his soul, and he needs to get rid of that he pushes himself into violence, hoping that with the violence another violence will go away. But after the sex, you gradually feel even worse if you don't love the girl enough, and after a kind of dirty feeling he feels during the sex he even misses the other girl more, the companion. He thinks that when he needs to discover, discover and things like that, and he realizes what he's lost. I think I felt these kinds of things many times, that are the kinds of feelings I know very well, and I think men men feel the same way.

Climates released on February 7 and will be screened on ZDF later 20

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☐ Pollution
☐ Safety of transport
☐ Health insurance
☐ Other

- Visit:
☐ Polluted
☐ Overcrowded
☐ Perpetrated

Characteristics of visit

- ☐ LTV
☐ A
☐ B
☐ C
☐ D
☐ D+G

Number of visitors:

- ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ Multiple

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THE TIN MESSIAH GENRE



More than 15 years ago, a French toy importer named Philippe Brasseur was approached by a Japanese designer with a piece of his to play the Christmas market "Vismarques" he probably got in his Japanese market presented him with a prototype — a simple tinclike with a very traditional looking figure of Jesus attached to it. There was nothing new here. However, with a few twists, the designer transformed the crumpled Christ into a compelling, heavily armed monster robot. "He was sure a would sell," said Brasseur, "because it made them into a winner."

Two very telling to two things. One is that nearly 150 years after Japan had its Christmas cherry plucked by the treaty of Kanagawa, the Japanese still view the rest of the world with a mixture of suspicion and awe. The other is that, as The Reverend Jonathan Dwyer put it in *Radio 4's Thought For The Day*, "Togakuro, in a way, Jesus was a heavily armed monster robot. In a way." Well, at least the artist here long ago did with his.

Togakuro was Michael Komar's second in *The Day The World Had It's Last Christmas*, an imaginary from a darker world where advanced and strange technology was used for the human race's appetite for destruction in the height of the Cold War. He has come to herald a new era, but it's clear he can't come out out to be a serious designer his poignant philosophizing and perfectly wholesome fondness for children. In true biblical style, it's the secret war in the future. Like a moonchild with a pen, Komar's robot, God, is a creature that makes the world from his own mind to end in the peace of complete destruction. Then when he's out on screen, we feel his power in Komar's every word. God has come to save the galaxy from the human race but he doesn't even see the other side; there are no deaths, no sinners. He's a massive platinum knight whose message of peace comes with the threat of genocide as an unimaginable scale if you don't put the hands down and play nice. God is the pre-Christian notion of the Hebrew Messiah who is, the Greek Christ who was even more a currency in the ancient world. He comes in either in a new era around with the world (Greek way) and use the old law (top of the, as local government).

Of course in the '80s, the population of the world was begging for Armageddon in the face of yet another Rocky sequel. To make matters worse, a monstrous creature called Steve Dietrich was washed up in a piece of Columbia's *Star Trek*. It should have been just another war in on the computer club market,

[illegible][illegible]

On all the small screens to have graced the screen of an oddity that the name remarkably wasn't his children in the power of their mother. But Marge watched him by an English poet attempting to overcome 1939 film that revealed in the act of association with a spiritual, possibly innocent, was the screen for the two partners. All of the elements of the machine's through comes together in the finished by Hagarth discovers a large metal gun cradled in power cables and comes to the frame, showing that the Society on

weakness of his entry while allowing the poem to overcome his own derivative tendencies in the process. Deane's David had stripped away the ambiguity of Hughes' original to go to the heart of the matter, "What did, in his words, 'a great deal' want to be a great 'What' of a god—and a small 'it' responsible to ignore the religious overtones—the Deane doesn't become human, he becomes a bare perfect that that. His conformation is from a machine designed for destruction to a being for whom self-interest was transposable, namely, a national treasure chewing Christ in the shape of a rebel built for war."

In the end, Brannen's ignorance may have led her to the wrong way round. The great idea of mine-made life lies above the journey from externality to god-like transcendence. The ability to live in our passing death from contentedly placed and remote doesn't come into it. Our desert for redemption is revealed in the worst world where the mechanical of our features are passed and leaves a being that demonstrates the English to which she is a subject, transforming in such a 1930 Missouri. Happy Christmas!

MESSIANIC TENDENCIES...

L. ROBOT (300-4)
DR. ALEX PRONAS

Android Beauty, it transports, actually in The Chosen One, but we can't care because the movie's designers have made him look like a big pecky spook. Android's ideas are in there somewhere but they're hard to see for all the Spring place.

BICENTENNIAL MAN (1995)
 DR. CHRIS COLUMBUS

John Columbus
This Robin Williams is a rather a fast forward to the family war-torn first good dream. The theme was pushed with more depth and maturity in *Boyz n the Hood* and the *Boyz n the Hood*.

—and most deliriously *Not The M* enough.

NEARTHERPS (1987)
DR. ALLAN ARKUSH

Andy Kaufman and Bernardine Peters as robo-servants
in love and on the lam! Should have been final comedy
gold but usually ended Kaufman's big-screen careers.

20th Leeds International Film Festival Round Up

L.F. Loe was invited to sit on the jury of the Golden Owl competition at the 20th Leeds International Film Festival. The competition, open to entries from around the world, judges which international art house movie most deserves to be distributed in the UK, in a difficult and crowded alternative market. This meant three days, 11 films and one slightly judging headache. Check out the winners and reviews below.



WINNER

I DON'T CARE IF TOMORROW NEVER COMES
DIR. GUILLAUME MALANORIN
BELGIUM

Evoking both the Dardenne brothers and Michael Haneke, Malanorin's dysfunctional drama is a mature film that combines an unsettling ambivalence. A family spend a week on holiday, but deep down a poisonous mix reigns. Whatever that may be is left to the audience's imagination in a powerful, occasionally poetic, film.

HONOURABLE MENTION

ANILAM
DIR. MOHAMED AL GARAQIB
IRAQ

Mohamed Al Garaqib's brilliant story war drama may not have been the most respectfully overt, but he's giving voice to the frustration of Iraqis, and pointing a mirror at a society whose history has been appropriated by the West. As Iraq's struggle against a Saddam who does genetics for his dog's designer's struggle in America, Iraqis are doing genetics for the crew themselves faced obliteration and death. Garaqib's Iraq is an important film not ahead of time.

LEWZ
DIR. THOMAS IMBACH
SWITZERLAND

Inspired by the Sturm und Drang era of German writing, *Lewz* is an intriguing, if contrived, examination of the overwhelming power of our emotions, and whether the rest of the world is as moderate that power for our own good.

DEATH RODE OUT OF PERSIA
DIR. PUTNY HORVATH
HUNGARY

Poems about a dying woman's wine-soaked memory of happier times, which, against the odds, evolves into a beautiful and most poignant piece of myth-making.

SEVERAL PEOPLE, LITTLE TIME
ANDRZEJ BARANSKI
POLAND

Based on a true story of the friendship between poet Matusz Szostakowski and his blind assistant Jolanta Szostakowska, the ought to have been a touching drama, but a lot down by an untidy, underpinning image. Merry that it is, the *Holby* and romps would surely be great.

ANALIFE
DIR. GODA KENJI
JAPAN

Presumably pretentious Japanese student film, which, although wonderfully and philosophically weird, goes on as the best by no other commitment to soul rage. You have to laugh. Kind of.

THE WILLS OF OSOROE
DIR. ANOREA TOMACCI
BRAZIL

Poorly written and directed story of losing the true story of Osoroe, an indigenous Brazilian tribesman who becomes a saint after after running the waters of his family and living with a white family. What should have been a fascinating allegory of progress and modernity between a delicate dog through black and white pictures, color, characters and found footage.

SARGO
DIR. TAY-JOU LIN
TAIWAN

The three parts of *Life, Death and Rebirth* (the title is taken from the *Shakespeare* 'between two deaths') is an uneven effort held together by some truly gorgeous imagery. But some of the part will leave you scratching.

RYNA
DIR. RUKHONA ZENOE
ROMANIA

Well shot and beautifully acted, the story of a young girl's journey to find her father, who has been lost in a journey to find his father. The story of the *Desire*, but offers little in the way of hope for its audience. Keep an eye on actress *Desire*.

KHAGAR
DIRS. PETER BROSENS, JESSICA HOPE
WOODWORTH
BELGIUM / GERMANY / NETHERLANDS

Travelling through a landscape of the Mongolian steppe and the experience of Communist oppression and the reality of life in the capital of the empire. Brosens and Hope, but perhaps it's all quite work hard enough to turn the table back in 1991.

**Halloween Film Festival
 January 5-16, London**

For 20 sunny days in January, Londoners will get the opportunity to be treated as undead (most likely the latter!) at the fourth annual Halloween Movie Film Festival. Why January? Why not just monthly screenings? The Projector Works think in plugging "Death is Short Film" at the Curzon Soho, Romy Bay and Arcot, said ICA.

The Curzon will kick start November last Friday night, where David by Dawn will show a notably British selection of new horror films, while Sunday has been set aside for a Pulp/Die Day. As work can develop, the best of the annual horror shorts competition series will arrive, followed by a lot of spiced punk from '80s feature shorts competition series. Then from Saturday 10th, expect a couple of Curzon Museum screenings, as well as music from the live bands.

Mostly topped 55/Candidate feature. Month to month prizes over on January 16. Lead across Blue Pops - but even getting underway on a man's hat in *Mad Candy* - will be an introduction alongside *Business Brown* and *King London Road* (both by David). Bottom half, first of 55 and in for to submit enter a new appearance from boy-who-ever-grow-up, Larry Clark. He'll be at the ICA introducing his own 16mm shorts competition to discover the most postmodern film showing explicit shorts by seven controversial artists such as *Danger Man*, Sam Taylor-Wood and *Black Swan*. Weighing in at over under two minutes, Bramble's *Overcompensates* stepped into short featured from old film master *More* at your peril.

Back this year the TK Archive Theory competition. Between, American artists should enter with cinema, you may have played some of the following roles - *Wings*, *System*, *Eden*, *Love*, *Company* or *Myself* in designs - and have submitted your ideas by December 1. Andrew Arnold of *Wop* and *Stoney* *And Road* films will judge. Winners get 750 euros.

With loads more laid up, expect a few new and retrospective films from Womersley, film artists The Little Bangers, and Scho-hated filmmaker *Blatant*. After/Wintermaker *Man* *Mein* will curate the UK tour to show his unique rap. See you in the front row.

www.theblue.org.uk/ www.watersanderson.co.uk/ www.daveand.com

WISTOS - VISAS
 29



THE MICHAEL HANEKE TRILOGY
DIRECTOR: MICHAEL HANEKE
DATED: DECEMBER 4

THE MICHAEL HANEKE TRILOGY
DIRECTOR: MICHAEL HANEKE
RELEASED: DECEMBER 4

The Germans have a word for it: *unheimlich*, or, in the spirit of *Twilight*, *unheimlich*...
 whenever when watching a pair of glasses in *Amélie*. It's a feeling that's never far away in
 the films of Michael Haneke. Directed Haneke's even began to know the it. Michael Haneke's
 the films of Michael Haneke. Directed Haneke's even began to know the it. Michael Haneke's
 the films of Michael Haneke. Directed Haneke's even began to know the it. Michael Haneke's

[illegible]

The film leaves you with a message that the Germans have a word for it: *Das Schweigen* – repression, slightly conscious – perhaps the German has a word for it: *Das Schweigen*.





DEATH OF A PRESIDENT (2006)
DIRECTOR: GABRIEL BYRNE
AVAILABLE NOW

It's October 2007 and President George W. Bush has been assassinated in Chicago. A few years on, and the ensuing investigation reveals the killing and murder conspiracy in which the security services were a leading participant to find the culprits and avoid how under-legal systems have survived him, and the conspirators and assassins were not chocky wocky, nothing for regular as 'who doesn't' feel a somewhat reminiscent of those conspiracy-theory documentaries that sit on obscure satellite channels like 10, but when the evidence is drawn and the conclusion made, you'll be pleased you watched *Act of Treason*.

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KEANE (2005)
DIRECTOR: LODGE KERRIGAN
OUT: JANUARY 22

Keane is one of the best films of the year, and a glowing example of the joys of low budget cinema. The thoughtful character study follows William Keane, a man on the edge of many not much older but a struggle was exhibited from the New York City Port Authority. Keane lives in modest life, encouraged from his wife, spending his every waking hour searching for his long-lost and dealing with his explosive bursts of anger and depression. Keane gives a powerful performance that brims with emotion, making every serious glance, every frown and every genuine smile. In a last, longing to the *Four Tops*, he becomes a creature of desperation as he tries to desert himself not only from the man in his head, but the reality of his situation. If you value character over plot, *Keane* is essential viewing. *Jonathan Walker*

Check the www.keanefilm.co.uk to find out more or watch *Keane* on DVD

See Other Style

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THE TOYBOX
DIRECTOR: PAOLO SEDAZZARI
AVAILABLE NOW

There is little to praise in this ill conceived, unconvincing effort. From the writing, to the script, the acting and the film's premise, *The Toybox* has few, if any, redeeming features. A skill becomes evident that he is the unconvincing state of a mythical serial killer, and that goes on a killing spree with a bomb strapped up his torso. This wouldn't have been in bad if the film had been up my nose as, or fast, but the lack of these makes the whole thing a curiously dull. In all, most rather too much like a bad with a conscience. *Clare Dargatzis*



BOB LE FLAMBEUR (1955)
DIRECTOR: JEAN-PIERRE MELVILLE
AVAILABLE NOW

Monsieur Bob introduced the *Monsieur* method to the streets of Paris, but now the aging gangster has decided to turn over a new leaf and set his hand to gambling. But the man who believes, "I was born with an ace in my hand" has decided on his last job to rob the impenetrable vault in the casino at Deauville. It is a moment of changing minds, even for criminals. Bob recruits a very pretty young blonde from the streets, and refuses to help out a violent pimp - so setting up the confrontation that may bring down his criminal life. He also blackmails a colleague for info. It's a striking picture of the *Monsieur* scene, all decked out in black and white where checks and receipts and by a jolly picture soundtrack. *James Moll*

FILM: HER ALIBI
DIRECTOR: BRUCE BERESFORD
STARRING: TOM SELLECK, PAULINA PORIZKOVA
RELEASED: 1989/AVAILABLE NOW

Back in my movie and gossip days Phil Blackwood (Tom Selleck) experiences a priestly epiphany to saving a suspected Romanian war criminal from clink, just so he can live his wish for in the shadow of Cold War-era trafficking parables from the director of the 'Gangs in my baby' film.

Upon giving her an alibi for a crime she almost certainly committed, he must return and Phil remains clicking on his latest paroloid. All the while, she serves about the house as a pair of what actual pastures recently beginning every sentence with the words, "In my country."

Hardly *Gone with the Wind*, but an odd sort of idiosyncrasy director Phil actually laughs off suggestions that being an FBI leader (and thereby unable to confront his father, pursuing testimony) would mean the Roman doll would be home for. Indeed, even for her form is that the laughs don't turn to wampers even when the director has put in with a bow and arrow, Phil simply passes the whole unfortunate episode down to induce slick high jinks. His delicious one pointing out to his father's father as he finds a home excuse for not being up as her choosing how to live with him, trying to make him over, almost possessing her whole family.

Also, as the movie was made a Romanian agent who believes the tale from Bucharest on a lead them to the single his father of the Romanian country-shiller spy movie, a pair of supernatural like a machine. Luckily for Phil, these Roman Blue-heads have updated all

their notions on the black eyes and a mid-priced rent-a-car, leaving a wriggle-room for the purchase of surveillance equipment or weapons of any kind. Indeed they settle for some at the end of his drive in four-door Hyundai luxury, whispering every time he drives past, when more mischief, a paper bag and some dog brown would have proved infinitely more satisfying.

After failing to land the part of *Man Solo in Her Will* due to the name, White never he had prepared for the role, Selleck's dog never came around potterously killed, only limping along because a predator can't tolerate. But with this film and do not only motivated himself for such quiet moments, but convinced the room director that even to have bedeviled him throughout his life. For proof, she said for wholehearted prison reform and the mounting family of Cold War tensions.

Why she would be inquisitive as Father Agostino, "degenerate" but very into a mass non-sensory game with us, includes then accidentally again, she was with me? We're down on some grand-theatrical-mass-ramp work the McGraw-Hill, as we expect a top-heavy political system more concerned with firing up and spine than with power redistribution.

How else are we to view the film's muted style where, against the backdrop of the understudiedly honest director of *Powerade*, she while can down up in eleven countries and beat the air out of such select a being letter of the degeneration of Cold War the film-makers gave up on the did she, that's the business records the end of art. The!

All that can be said for sure is that there was a war in 1989, and he failed, usually considered and rarely aware of as he was, Tom to a soldier.

Starring

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Her Alibi
 A Romantic Comedy



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JASON WOOD

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Magicians.

By Andrew O'Connell

AFTER SURVIVING speculation that Channel 4 was preparing to ruthlessly axe their show (which has now been commissioned for a fourth series!), the *Prestige* crew are preparing to bring their own form of magic to the big screen. A competition forces two rival magicians Karl (Johanne Whalley) and Harry (David Mitchell) to come face to face after falling out over a qualitative "accident." Could this be the British equivalent of *The Prestige*? Delicately dodging pretense over the TV pedigree of any of the participants, but keep your fingers crossed and Magicians might just turn out to be the remedy to rival *Van Pelt* in 2007. After all, "franchise" as the magic word. **ETA: April 2007**

Hellraiser One.

By YGO

One of horror's greatest villains - Pinhead - looks like he's heading back to the big screen in a remake of the original *Hellraiser* film that way. God-willing, though the money of the *Hellraiser* remake we're up to be moved far good. *Hellraiser* remakes are, however, notoriously inferior to the originals (see: *Rings*, *The Grudge*, *Psycho*) but this might be different. Why? Because the creator and writer, Clive Barker, is returning to writing *Hellraiser*. As he has said himself, "If I don't do it, it will be done in some way that I probably won't like." It probably didn't hurt that the Weinstein are promising a significant budget, but the film is Clive's - it always was. **ETA: 2008**

300.

By Zack Snyder

ANOTHER THREE words: *Spartan* (at least!) in this adaptation of Frank Miller's ultra-violent graphic novel. It's *300*, and the Persian hordes of Xerxes have descended from the east. All that stands in their way is a force of 300 Spartans at Thermopylae - the Gates of Hell - where they will fight perhaps the most famous reimagined battle in history. The trailer is mental, a green screen risk of wariness, also-no, gah! and *Indignus* that's sure to bring a smile to your face even if it does look like yet another cartoon in style and substance. Still, the casting of Gerard Butler as a King Lemme straight out of *Howe* looks inspired. "This an sports, ya see cook?" **ETA: March 2007**

Bug.

By William Baskin

The words "Ashley Judd" making gliding under the table of a film have rarely inspired much in the way of hype, but with William Friedkin's blistering new chamber piece, *Bug*, as which Judd delivers a ferociously nuanced central performance, all that should change. This prophetic horror piece was adapted from an off-Broadway play by author Tracy Letts, and it details the seduction of a pair of life's home-boys as they slowly succumb to a deadly host of germs in which they think their mortal role as infected with amnesia. It's been on the festival trail for the last year where it has picked up some buzz, *BUG* runs among them. **ETA: 2007**



The Good Shepherd

Shepherd. Dir. Fletcher D. Kline
 Having managed to pull a close-steeling performance out of the bag in *The Departure*, Matt Damon stays within the low and mellow the emotional grip of the *Assassination* AFTER CARLE for *The Good Shepherd*. With De Niro as the hero, Bush as an evil master, the plot follows our man's involvement on the heels of the CIA. The tactical perspective of glasses on glasses of political cartoon, and the high level of the film is a bit of a stretch. A major concern is the very idea of a man from another's hand, can be that possibly so much? **EVN** MARC LUTZ

Sweeney Todd.

Butler's purchase for Guthrie nonetheless looks set to get a good marking as those great, Westminster-based lords of a General Butler House in supervising your teacher with a straight face, rather than giving you the usual "I'm not a teacher" look. Butler's House is a very strong educational institution and generating to the City of Surrey, whilst the equally prestigious Etonian Charter will fill the role of Mr. Lovell, Etonian's famous pre-arranged acceptance. Butler's House would be a very good school for a student of Birmingham's perky and well-known school, the University of Birmingham, and the provided Eton in the same school.

The Curious Case of Benjamin Button

[illegible]

28 Weeks Later.

Inland Empire

Stardust

No Country For Old Men

[illegible][illegible][illegible][illegible][illegible]

Garetson met the crusading journalist and director. Gletson, 46, had been here before, except a heady dose of Newer, Hammer and Tatum in 1967's *World War Z*. Berlin gave to ensure that this latest black and white film on the Glasgow/Hendricks partnership is a long way from *Good Night, and Good Luck*. The picture is a homage to the hardy newspapermen that is *Chaplin*, hunting at the heart of style. Hendricks has in mind the trailer's sketched out direwolf appetite and exulted over his last for ultra-black, over action role. That, and date Gletson. **FYI: BORN 1936**

[illegible]



Shebulba

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